

THE INDEPENDENT

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THE TABLOID

A LAST WORD FROM JEFFREY BERNARD

THE TABLOID

THE IRRESISTIBLE RETURN OF KYLIE MINOGUE

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WITH THE VOUCHER ON PAGE 10 OF THE TABLOID

IRA puts a bomb under peace talks

David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

The Irish peace process received a sharp blow and a significant boost in quick succession yesterday, when an ominous IRA statement was followed by a sign of overwhelming Protestant approval for talks with Sinn Fein.

Most worrying for the British and Irish governments, the IRA calmly announced that it "would have problems with" the Mitchell principles of commitment to non-violence and democracy, which Sinn Fein formally accepted on Tuesday.

The six principles pledge a commitment to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations; a renunciation of the use of force and agreement to abide by the terms of any new agreement reached in the negotiations.

The IRA statement, made in an interview in the publication *Republican News*, appeared to provide strong evidence to back up Unionist complaints that Sinn Fein's pledge was no more than an empty formula.

Sinn Fein quickly declared that the party was "committed to totally democratic and peaceful means in the search for peace" and that "Sinn Fein is not the IRA and speaks for itself".

But few across the political spectrum were prepared to accept the proposition that Sinn Fein and the IRA were completely separate entities, and that one section of the republican movement could proclaim its pacifism while the other specifically reserved the right to return to violence.

The almost universal view in political and security circles is

that Sinn Fein and the IRA are inextricably linked, with a common political direction and significant dual membership. The statement may have been designed to reassure IRA hardliners that Sinn Fein's endorsement of the Mitchell principles did not mean the terrorist organisation had formally renounced violence forever.

On one reading it was little more than a statement of the obvious, given that the organisation has made clear that its ceasefire, declared in mid-July, is complete but not permanent. But it can be taken as indicating a cavalier attitude to formal pledges.

Its timing was seen as particularly unhelpful to those within David Trimble's Ulster Unionists who are arguing that the party should go into the multi-party talks when they reconvene in Belfast on Monday.

A key meeting of the party executive is to be held in Belfast tomorrow. Although it will not have decision-making powers on the issue, it will have a significant influence on the party leadership's decision. The IRA spokesman has since said either deliberately provocative or, at best, indifferent to the concerns of Unionists at a sensitive time.

But the party decision is also likely to be influenced by the near-sensational findings of a new opinion poll, which appears to show that an overwhelming majority of Unionists favour entry into talks.

The poll, carried out by the *Belfast Telegraph*, in association with the Rowntree Trust and others, found that no fewer than 93 per cent of Ulster Unionist Party supporters

Can the puzzle be solved?
Essay, page 16

Braveheart: William Wallace (played by Alan Alda) responding to Edward I, after the English king says 'I have done away with an outlaw', in a 700th anniversary re-creation of the Battle of Stirling Bridge on the day Scotland voted on Home Rule. 'You have not,' says Wallace, 'you have made a nation'

Photograph: Brian Harris

Whitehall's 'Ministry of Truth' to rival Millbank machine

Kim Sengupta

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then this is another famous victory for Labour's spin doctors. After repeated complaints about the Government Information Service from Tony Blair's ministers, Whitehall is to set up a media monitoring unit modelled on the party's slick PR operation.

In a ground-breaking initiative, press officers seconded from each Government department will work in a team to record, analyse, and, if necessary, rebut almost every item of news about Government policy in the media. *The Independent* can reveal.

The unit, already being called the "Ministry of Truth" by some sceptical civil servants, will be operational within a month. Mike Bonnatt, the head of the GIS, is

officially in charge, but Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, is taking a keen interest.

Since coming to office, many ministers had been relying on a daily bulletin prepared by the Labour Party's own monitoring unit at Millbank, near Westminster, charting daily presentation of policy in the media. There had been increasing unease among civil servants over the influence of Millbank.

Four departmental press heads have gone from their posts since Labour came to power, and others are said to be under threat. This week it was announced that Gill Samuel, head of information at the Ministry of Defence, is being replaced. Other changes have included Jill Rutter, a senior civil servant at the Treasury, who asked to return to policy duties,

and the removal from his post of Andy Wood, director of information at the Northern Ireland Office.

Last month, Mr Granatt told a meeting of departmental information heads that drastic action was needed to counter ministers' disillusionment with aspects of the GIS. The decision to go ahead with a pilot project was taken two weeks ago, at another meeting at the Home Office.

It is estimated that around 20 people would be needed to run the unit. But it has not yet been decided where it is to be physically situated. There are also ongoing discussions about the funding, with some departments wanting the Treasury to pick up the main part of the bill.

The unit will not be dealing directly with the media. Instead it is designed to be an internal pool for information and

ideas for each Government department. Those selected to be it will be expected to not only record what the media are saying, but dissect it and present a critique. Any "mistake" or "twisting" of the perceived facts by journalists will be immediately noted and passed on to appropriate departments.

Ministers want to know how their statements or actions have been portrayed at the earliest opportunity. Many of them, and their advisers from Millbank, were astonished to discover that some duty press officers do not have access to the first editions of the newspapers at night.

After one press conference, a senior minister called his Whitehall press team together to complain he had never been so badly prepared. A junior minister complained: "It was a shock after dealing with the peo-

ple at Millbank to come here. Quite frankly they have an awful lot to learn from the Labour Party in this".

A senior information officer said: "We are always willing to learn. The fact remains that the Labour Party ran a very slick and successful media campaign in the run-up to the election, and ministers were unhappy with what they found at many of their departments."

"It is a fact that many ministers were relying on the briefing papers sent from the Millbank monitoring unit, and we had to either adapt or see our role being eroded. So this came about. There is some talk of a cull of the GIS by the new Government. But that is not the case. In some cases there simply has not been the chemistry needed between ministers and senior officers."

After one press conference, a senior minister called his Whitehall press team together to complain he had never been so badly prepared. A junior minister complained: "It was a shock after dealing with the peo-

Less smell, more profit, says British Gas

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The pipeline company which distributes gas around Britain is trying to change its smell.

Unions argued yesterday that the company was planning to make it smell less like gas because, if it succeeded, there would be fewer reports of leaks and it would need fewer engineers employed on call-outs.

Transco, the British Gas supply subsidiary which has launched the alleged plan, contends that it may well reduce the "ponging quotient", but said it had nothing to do with job losses.

Officials of Unison, the public service union, smelled a rat when the company alluded to the scheme in a meeting this week to discuss 2,500 redundancies among the engineers.

A document shown to the union said that the artificial smell added to the odourless North Sea gas was to be reduced to the "minimum level to achieve customer awareness and recognition". While the old town gas had a satisfactory stench of its own, the new supply needed an additive to ensure that leaks could be detected.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of Unison told TUC

delegates in Brighton that lives would be put at risk if Transco went ahead with the strategy.

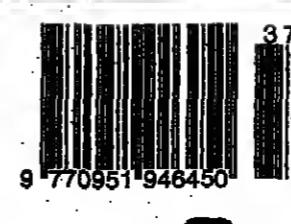
Mike Fermor, the union's head of energy, added: "When water leaks you get wet, when gas leaks you are dead".

Sue Slipman, director of the Gas Consumers Council, said she was worried about the plan: "This clearly has implications for safety standards and we shall be seeking an urgent meeting with Transco. Even if it is scientifically justified it represents a worsening of standards."

A statement from Transco contended that its intention to reduce the levels of "odorant"



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QUICKLY
Memorial plans
The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, who is chairing the committee planning a memorial for Diana, Princess of Wales, met her brother Earl Spencer to discuss the project. Page 7
MOUTH WATERING OYSTERS.
(BUT NOT FROM OUR FOOD HALL.)



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Lessons of the past: Soutar Hospital, where the extent of the Augustinians' expertise was revealed. Cadfael, played by Derek Jacobi (below) is portrayed as a herbalist

Prozac, opium and myrrh: the ancient arts of anaesthesia are unlocked

Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

A medieval hospital that straddled the main highway between England and Scotland has yielded the secrets of its extensive pharmacopoeia showing that centuries-old treatments offered to the casualties of war between the two countries have never been bettered by modern medicine.

More than 200 herbs and spices were used in combinations to provide early painkillers and anaesthetics, antiseptics and anti-depressants for the retreating English armies – in some cases hundreds of years before their first previously recorded use.

Though the discovery has surprised historians, it will be greeted with quiet satisfaction by addicts of Ellis Peters' Brother Cadfael books – who doubtless about a medieval monk who potters in his herb garden, concocting remedies.

Detailed examination of the "medical waste" – mainly blood and human remains – retrieved from the drains of Soutar Hospital near Edinburgh, show that the Augustinian brethren who ran it for 500 years, from the 12th to the 17th centuries, were sophisticated physicians able to offer everything from major surgery to sleeping draughts for insomnia.

Battle-scarred soldiers facing amputation were anaesthetised with a cocktail of black henbane,



Natural drug: St John's Wort, used to treat depression

Edinburgh's National Museum show that the hospital, one of the largest in Europe in the Middle Ages, was taken over at least 80 occasions by English armies.

Dr Brian Moffat, the archaeologist who has led the investigation, said that some English kings returned again and again.

"It was usually the ones with

blood on their hands – Edward I, II and III. One can only assume the facilities were up to

their standards. They didn't like to rough it, you know."

Dr Moffat, who describes himself as a professional muck-raker, has been analysing the contents of the hospital's drains for more than a decade looking for clues to the remedies and treatments used. Grisly evidence of amputations comes from the "surgical offcuts" that litter the site and mixtures of seeds indicate the drug cocktails that were given. "Discarded seeds are the mirror image of a recipe. If you can get hold of the seeds you can get inside the mind of the medieval physician," said Dr Moffat.

Opium was mixed with lard to provide an analgesic salve for wounds. The addition of myrrh, a highly efficient bactericide, and honey gave it antiseptic as well as painkilling properties. The use of myrrh, which came only from south-west Arabia, suggested the hospital was rich and well-connected.

Infestations of lice and scabies, frequent among the malnourished, were treated with arsenic preparations which were still in use in the Royal Edinburgh hospital in the 1960s. Worm infestations were treated with tormentil, a herb similar to the more common silverweed. Tincture of tormentil is still available from chemists as a treatment for worms and as an astringent for diarrhoea.

"What this means is that in 800 years, that treatment has not been improved on. The reason

you may not have heard of it is that drug companies cannot make a profit out of something that grows on every Scottish hilltop," Dr Moffat said.

The findings have stirred debate in medical circles over whether the medical history books will have to be rewritten. Professor Adam Smith of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh told BBC Radio 4's *Today* that Dr Moffat had provided a new picture of medieval anaesthetics. "We had always thought the simplest anaesthetic was to give an overdose of alcohol and render the patient senseless," the professor said.

Dr Moffat said: "Our research provides proof positive of the use of anaesthetics 500 years before [medical circles] recognise it."

But the process is difficult and risky. The aorta has a web of branches, and inserting the probe into the wrong branch could be deadly. Thus, it has to be tracked using X-rays throughout the operation.

The surgeons and theatre staff have to wear lead-lined clothes, and a lot of people are getting exposed to radiation over a long period," said Professor Bell. "It isn't good." Roughly 3,000 aortic repairs are carried out every year in Britain.

Surgeons can already repair aortic aneurysms using keyhole surgery, in which a probe is inserted into the femoral artery, in the groin, and pushed upwards towards the heart. At the aneurysm site, a tube of metal – known as a "stent" – is left to support the aorta's wall and reduce the stress on it.

...while tomorrow's surgeons will rely on virtual reality

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

British surgeons will lead the world by using virtual reality (VR) systems to repair damaged arteries, a technique that could be available to thousands of people within two years.

The new operation is potentially less hazardous than the standard operation, and VR could also help doctors score themselves for accuracy and speed in performing surgery, the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Leeds heard yesterday.

Professor Peter Bell of the University of Leicester revealed that within eight months he hopes the first test will go ahead

at Leicester Royal Infirmary with a human volunteer. It will use keyhole surgery with VR techniques to repair a weakened section of the aorta's wall.

The aorta is the main blood vessel leading from the heart, and a weakness – or aneurysm – can be fatal if it bursts. Roughly 10,000 people are reckoned to die every year from aneurysms.

Surgeons can already repair aortic aneurysms using keyhole surgery, in which a probe is inserted into the femoral artery, in the groin, and pushed upwards towards the heart. At the aneurysm site, a tube of metal – known as a "stent" – is left to support the aorta's wall and reduce the stress on it.

But the process is difficult and risky. The aorta has a web of branches, and inserting the probe into the wrong branch could be deadly. Thus, it has to be tracked using X-rays throughout the operation.

The tip of the probe carrying the stent is fitted with induction coils, which give out a magnetic field so that it can be tracked up the aorta. By combining this data with the CT scans, the computer can show the surgeon precisely where the stent is.

The operation is ideal for this sort of "fly-by-wire" surgery, said Professor Bell, because the patient does not move, and the aorta does not move, unlike organs such as the heart or bowel.

These pictures will be sharp enough to help scientists conduct detailed geological studies without needing to set foot on the planet. It will, in particular, help to identify the likeliest sites where life might have taken hold, including areas where

the craft, which is about the size of a large garden shed and weighs about one ton, will not land on Mars. Instead it will position itself in a low orbit, taking high-resolution photographs which will show objects as small as 1.5 metres across.

Coming soon after the *Pioneer* project, the spacecraft will perform the most comprehensive photographic survey of another planet ever undertaken, and provide scientists with better maps of our nearest planetary neighbour than ext-

isted of Earth itself, until recently.

In the early hours of this morning, ground control was due to attempt a risky 22-minute engine burn to slow the spacecraft to about 9,000 mph and place it into an elliptical orbit.

This will be followed by four months in which ground control will use a navigational technique called aerobraking, in which the vessel dives into the upper reaches of the Martian atmosphere to lose speed and height.

These pictures will be sharp enough to help scientists conduct detailed geological studies without needing to set foot on the planet. It will, in particular, help to identify the likeliest sites where life might have taken hold, including areas where

there was once water, such as lake shores and mineral remains of ancient hot springs.

The mission is the first in the second wave of a decade-long invasion of the red planet by NASA, which will launch a probe to Mars every 26 months into the next decade.

Some will land, and bigger, better rovers are planned that will roam the surface for kilometres, collecting rock samples and even sending them home to Earth as the search for extraterrestrial life intensifies.

These pictures will be sharp enough to help scientists conduct detailed geological studies without needing to set foot on the planet. It will, in particular, help to identify the likeliest sites where life might have taken hold, including areas where

Video clue to cot death mystery

Tim Cornwell
Los Angeles

Research findings by a controversial British doctor who claims to have used hidden cameras to film mothers trying to strangle or choke their babies are to be published in an American medical journal.

Pediatrician Dr David Southall became a deeply controversial figure when it emerged that he had arranged the secret taping of parents after their children were hospitalized because they were thought to be at risk of cot death – also known as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

But *Pediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, will publish his work as the leading article in its November issue along with a "laudatory" commentary from one of America's best-known experts on child abuse.

The journal's editor, Dr Jerold Lucey, said Dr Southall had been pilloried in some quarters in Britain for approving the secret filming of families where he suspected that abuse, or medical illness, explained cot death. But attitudes were very different on the other side of the Atlantic, and the article was an attempt to vindicate Dr Southall's work, much of it at the North Staffordshire Infirmary in Stoke-on-Trent.

"The British attitude seems to be that it wasn't cricket," Dr Lucey said. "We happen to think he's a hero." He said the journal would seek permission to take the videotapes and make them available on the Internet as a teaching tool, with faces blocked out.

Most pediatricians cannot believe themselves to believe that a mother could murder her

own child, but Dr Southall's work was "proof positive" in pictures. Dr Southall has become a major figure in a debate that has raged on both sides of the Atlantic for 25 years over the medical diagnosis of SIDS and how often it is a cover for child abuse or infanticide – particularly where a previous death of a child in a family is blamed on cot death.

In 1972, *Pediatrics* published an article that examined two deaths from SIDS in a New York family, and suggested that it could run in families. It helped to create an entire industry devoted to diagnosing and testing for SIDS. But two decades later the mother in the case, Waneta Hoyt, confessed to killing five of her children.

Dr Southall, armed with studies of thousands of children, led those who challenged the notion that SIDS ran in families and set out to prove that it was impossible to identify babies that were going to die. His work is described in a new book, *The Killing of Innocents*, published in the US by Bantam.

Dr Lucey refused to supply a copy of the journal, saying it was embargoed for publication in November, and Dr Southall did not return phone calls yesterday. But his work will reportedly be printed alongside new US research showing that of 155 cases of "near miss" SIDS cases at a hospital in Massachusetts over 20 years, in which children have reportedly stopped breathing and been revived, one-third had suspicious circumstances.

The article brings together research that started in the 1980s and reportedly involved the filming of hundreds of parents hospitalised with their infant children.

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news

Doctors give measles vaccine all-clear

Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

There is no evidence that measles vaccination increases the risk of bowel disease, and fears about the safety of the injections may have been overplayed, scientists say.

Alarm about measles vaccination has grown in recent years because of concern that it may lead to ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease - both inflammatory diseases of the bowel - in later life. A 1995 study, published in the *Lancet*, by doctors from the Royal Free Hospital in London, suggested there could be a link, which led to some parents refusing the vaccine for their children.

In a new study, published in tomorrow's *Lancet*, Dr Mark Feeney and colleagues at Poole Hospital, Dorset, studied 140 patients with inflammatory bowel diseases born since 1968 and found they were no more likely to have had measles vaccination than 280 healthy patients matched for age and sex.

A separate analysis of patients with Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis again revealed no significant difference in measles vaccination rates.

"Our results show no evidence of a link between live attenuated measles vaccination in early childhood and the subsequent risk of developing either [disease]," the authors write.

Experts say the risks of the measles vaccine are outweighed by the risks of the disease it prevents, which can cause brain damage and death.



Full ahead: Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, aboard HMS Gannet, the last surviving Victorian naval sloop, in Chatham Dockyard to announce a £16m facelift for the yard. Some £10m will come from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Sir William Staveley, chairman of the dockyard's trust, said the cash would help turn it into a world-class heritage site. Photograph: John Voss

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Carey attacks social ills of joblessness

The Archbishop of Canterbury delivered a hard-hitting speech on the social ills of unemployment yesterday. Speaking at a conference on joblessness in London, Dr George Carey said church leaders had "a right and duty" to speak out on such problems as the "spiritual exclusion" of unemployment.

He explicitly praised the Labour government's inquiry into Britain's underclass, but warned the new administration against slavishly following economic dogma.

Dr Carey also spoke of the "excesses of one-eyed monetarism in the 1980s" to an audience that included the Chancellor, Gordon Brown.

It came just two days after he became the first Archbishop of Canterbury to address the TUC conference in Brighton, where he said employers had a "moral responsibility" to recognise unions.

"We all need to be needed," he said. "Dignified work is about participating in the common life, about making a useful contribution to our fellow

citizens, about being part of a community of work even about fulfilling a part of our humanity. That is why, as Archbishop William Temple pointed out, the worst suffering of unemployment lies not in its material deprivation but in the spiritual deprivation of exclusion from contributing to the common life of society."

Yesterday Dr Carey officially received an ecumenical report into unemployment commissioned by the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland and published during the general election campaign.

"The churches have a right to speak out about it, both because our beliefs about the nature of humanity and because we are present in every part of this land, including those from which most other institutions have departed," he said.

Dr Carey was "delighted" with the Cabinet Office's new inquiry into social exclusion. "It is courageous and right deliberately to raise expectations in this way and make it a touchstone for the long-term success

of government policies," he said, adding: "First, no doubt there will be some who will greet this as 'once again the Church is getting embroiled in politics'."

"If by that they mean taking our place in the affairs of life, caring for people and seeking to ensure that others have the rights and privileges they deserve as children of God, then we plead guilty. If they mean that we are dabbling in party politics, they are wrong because what this inquiry is about transcends us all and calls all people, regardless of political and religious affiliation, to tackle the curse of unemployment."

Later, the Tory MP Ann Widdecombe accused the Archbishop of "proselytising for the socialists". Miss Widdecombe, who converted from the Anglican Church to Roman Catholicism, told PA News that Dr Carey seemed "wholly unaware that the Tories' unemployment record was the envy of the rest of Europe, and particularly in the field of youth unemployment. It is significant that he never gave any credit for this".

GP induced 'easy death' of patients

A country doctor has admitted inducing the "easy death" of two of his patients. Dr Nick Maurice, 54, whose family has treated people for generations in the market town of Marlborough, Wiltshire, said that doctors practise euthanasia all the time and should be proud of it.

His comments drew support from the writer and broadcaster Sir Ludovic Kennedy, the president of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society, who lives at nearby Avebury. He praised the doctor's actions as "admirable".

Wiltshire police said they are aware of the doctor's admissions - given in a newsletter to his patients - and were "looking at the circumstances".

Dr Maurice, who works in the town's only GP practice - the Marlborough Surgery with about 12,000 patients - denies any suggestion that he is simply "killing" his patients. He declares in his newsletter:

"We doctors are practising euthanasia all the time and should be proud of it. In the past three months I have induced a quiet and easy death for two of my patients for which the relatives were grateful. That is not to say I have killed two patients. It is simply to say that I have given sufficient quantities of morphine to ensure that the physical and mental suffering of the patient, and the relative also, has been kept to a minimum."

The doctor does not name the patients. He defines euthanasia as allowing people to die "peacefully and quietly".

He says: "I simply offer the best possible comfort and care using drugs available to me. His surgery patients are invited to fill in Advance Directives - sometimes called "living wills" - stating how they wished to be treated in the event of terminal illness. He declares in his newsletter:

"We have Directives from patients which brought about the doctor's article, according to practice manager Michael Reynolds.

He said: "Dr Maurice wrote the article because of interest being shown by his patients in these Advance Directives. We decided it would be best to clarify what the practice does in such circumstances."

Dr Maurice is against legalisation of the induction of a patient's death. He maintains: "I have grave concern how an induced death would be handled. I can envisage a patient being surrounded by lawyers, doctors and even policemen - and that is the last scenario a dying person needs."

Sir Ludovic gives his support for the doctor in a letter to the *Wiltshire Gazette and Herald*. He praises the doctor's actions as "admirable for the compassion shown in bringing his patients' suffering to an end".

festival of science

Football loses out in psychology game

Why Gareth Southgate should never have taken that penalty

Nicholas Schoon

Gareth Southgate should never have been allowed to take the missed penalty that knocked England out of the European Championship last year.

A psychological profile of the player, unveiled at the British Association yesterday by Dr George Sik, a psychologist, describes a team player who will volunteer for anything but who is temperamentally unsuited to taking penalties.

Dr Sik said he was not allowed to name the player, who filled in a questionnaire as part of a research study. But he left no doubt that it could only have been Southgate.

Asked directly if he was referring to Southgate he said: "There have been three or four players who have missed penalties in major tournaments recently. It was one of those. In fact it was probably the first one you would think of."

He confirmed that the player had volunteered to take the penalty and that it was a last-minute decision.

Dr Sik, from management consultants Saville and Holdsworth, believes football teams could benefit from business techniques such as psychological profiling. He has built up profiles of 60 players concentrating on three clubs, Crystal Palace, Sheffield United and Celtic, and interviewed several managers.

Clubs are making increasing use of psychologists and psychiatrists. The Rangers and England player Paul Gascoigne sought counselling following reports that he had beaten his wife, and more recently his international colleague Ian Wright pledged to have counselling for his surplus aggression.

But Dr Sik, who has written two books about football and the mind, said that clubs often enlist such help too late, when a club is in the relegation zone or close to a crucial cup tie. And they often face suspicion and resentment from coaches who feel undermined.

He advocates profiling of



What a choker: Gareth Southgate's penalty miss in last year's Euro96 semi-final against Germany may have been avoided by using psychological profiles of players which can identify the right mental characteristics needed for such situations. His England colleagues Paul Gascoigne (top left) and Ian Wright, have both sought counselling for their problems

Photographs: PA/Allsport/The Mirror

every player when they join the club. His 60 subjects had to answer a standard psychometric questionnaire of the kind used by firms for prospective and rising employees.

Players answered about 230 questions concerning how they feel about themselves and others, their attitudes, values and how they would deal with a range of situations. "We found the players covered the whole spectrum of personalities. There was nothing to distinguish them from the other people we profile, apart from being slightly more competitive."

He suggests players chosen to take penalties should never be of a pessimistic cast of mind. Nor should they be the type who

would volunteer to take the shot out of a sense of duty.

"Treating everyone in a team exactly the same way, the old 'get your heads down and get stuck in' school of management associated with sergeant majors, is unlikely to get good results in a group comprised of differing individuals all motivated by different things."

He said legendary football

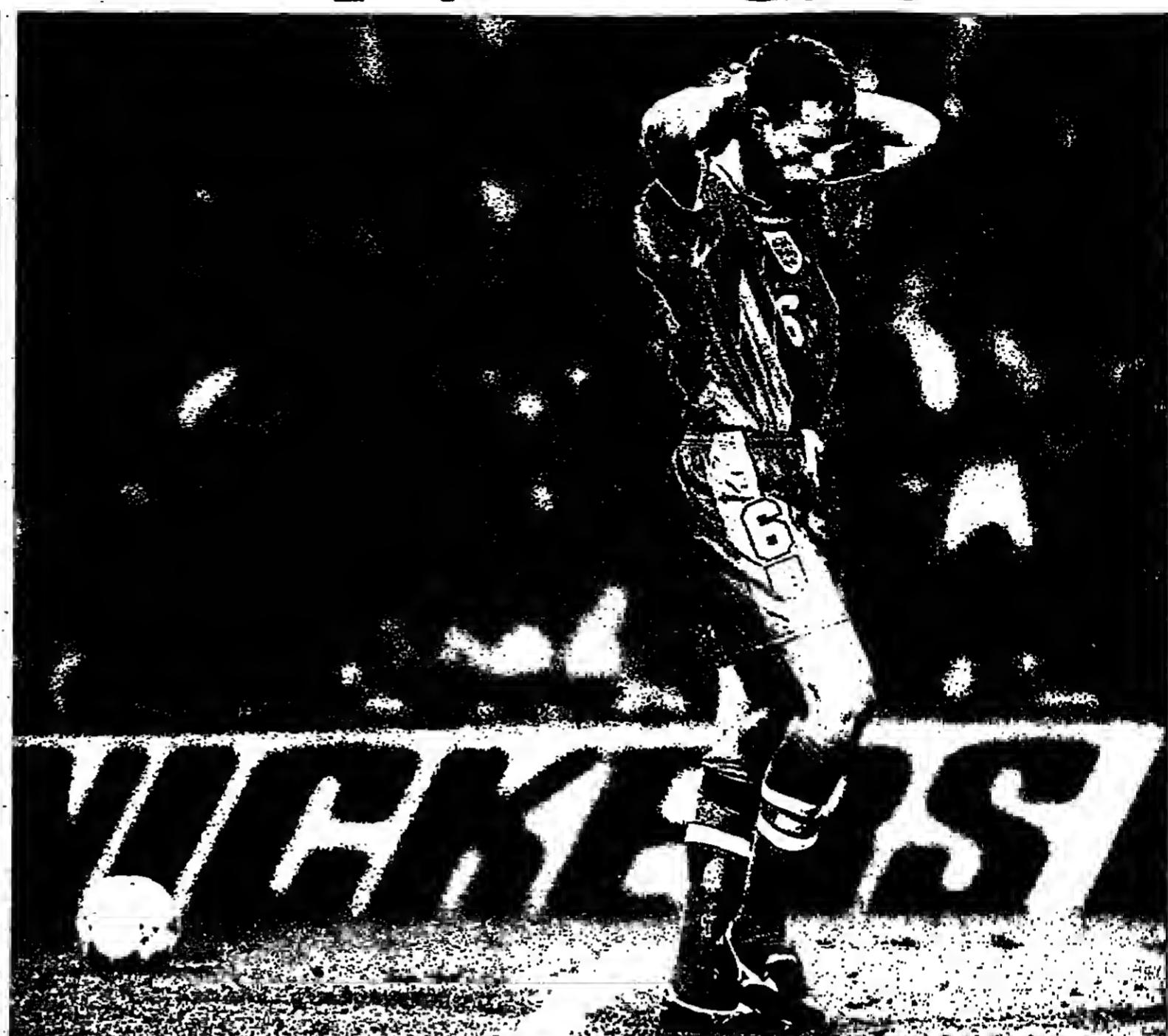
managers such as Jock Stein, who led Celtic in the 1960s, and Alex Ferguson of Manchester United, were instinctive psychologists with a superb understanding of motivation.

Stein built up files on his players, their foibles and fears, by talking and drinking with friends and family members. His diminutive winger Jimmy John-

stone loathed flying, and Stein assured him before an important match that he would not have to fly to the second leg overseas. "It worked - Johnston got a flurry of goals."

Dr Sik said that with clubs spending increasingly garrulous sums to buy players, it was worth assessing the footballer's long-term motivation. And having done so, it made no sense not to do everything the club could to ensure the stars were as highly motivated as possible.

He believes older players have different motivations to younger ones and are more supportive and team-spirited. They can make a contribution to the motivation of other players, even when injured.



What a choker: Gareth Southgate's penalty miss in last year's Euro96 semi-final against Germany may have been avoided by using psychological profiles of players which can identify the right mental characteristics needed for such situations. His England colleagues Paul Gascoigne (top left) and Ian Wright, have both sought counselling for their problems

Dining with the dinosaurs proved a ripping tale

Nicholas Schoon

Tyrannosaurus rex was a "shark feeder" which ripped its prey apart by holding victims in its huge jaws and rapidly swinging its skull from side to side, up and down, a scientist told the British Association's Annual Festival Of Science yesterday.

This shaking either ripped huge mouthfuls of flesh off the skeleton or was used to dismember the body, snapping bones and tearing off limbs, said Dr Phegurien Lingham-Soliar of the Russian Academy of Scientists. It is a method of feeding used today by sharks, crocodiles and killer whales.

However, Dr Lingham-Soliar has no solid proof like so much dinosaur lore, hysteria mounts to intelligent speculation.

Its starting points are that the huge, bipedal carnivore which became extinct 67 million years ago had tiny forelimbs and an enormous skull and teeth. These minuscule arms were too puny to grasp struggling prey while the skull was so big in order to provide attachment



Jaws: *Tyrannosaurus rex* ripped its prey apart

the theory of some palaeontologist that *T. rex* was mainly a scavenger feeding on the remains of animals killed by other predators. "An animal built like that is no scavenger," he said. He guesses it could run at 30mph.

Tiny, floating soap bubbles filled with air and helium have helped uncover the secrets of the flight of birds, which are believed to have descended from an early dinosaur. Biological aerodynamics expert Professor Jeremy Rayner explained how his group at Bristol University had been using these bubbles to study the all-important air vortices left by flying birds.

The bubbles hang motionless in the air in the laboratory until a bird flaps through them. Their movement is then captured on film and used to analyse the precise shape and movement of the vortices.

Understanding the behaviour of these high energy air movements is essential to explaining the lift and forward propulsion and estimating the energy consumption of flapping flight.

Dr Lingham-Soliar rejects

areas for massive neck muscles in the vigorous shaking. Rows of teeth the size of carving knives would rip through flesh and sinew as the prey was swung violently around.

Dr Lingham-Soliar, editor of a Moscow based palaeontology journal and a specialist in functional anatomy, said Steven Spielberg got much of his dinosaur details right in *Jurassic Park* (he has yet to see this summer's sequel).

Dr Lingham-Soliar rejects

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So why did the seven-ton dinosaur, which stood 15ft tall, have such tiny forelimbs? The scientist believes it was because *T. rex*'s ancestors had less and less use for them, so evolution reduced their size.

Perhaps they were used to help get it up to its hind legs after lying down.

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news

One in five Britons fails literacy test

More than one in five adults in Britain has literacy skills so poor they cannot adequately read a bus timetable, fill in a form or follow a recipe, according to an international survey.

The Government-backed study, published yesterday, reveals that more British adults are struggling at the lowest literacy level than their counterparts in any other developed country surveyed – except Poland.

Older people, the unemployed and women are among the groups most likely to experience serious difficulties with reading.

The bleak findings were seized on by David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, as vindication of the Government's literacy strategy, emphasising the three Rs in schools, and employment schemes for young people. However, basic skills experts stressed the need also to help older adults, who did particularly poorly in the tests.

The study, published by the Office for National Statistics, is based on a random sample of 3,800 British people aged between 16 and 65.

It found that 22 per cent – equivalent to around 8.4 million in the population as a whole – lacked the ability to compare and contrast two written pieces of information or work out simple sums, such as the amount saved on a product discounted in a sale.

A further 30 per cent of those who took the tests performed only at literacy Level

Study finds many struggling with the most basic skills, writes Lucy Ward

Two. The figures mean that more than half the British population has literacy skills below Level Three – the standard generally agreed as the minimum necessary to cope with the demands of modern life.

The study, to include over 20 countries by the end of 1998, defines literacy as "using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential."

Those taking part carried out 45 tasks based on material from daily life such as recipes and tables of returns on investments.

The assessments measured three types of literacy: prose literacy – the ability to understand newspapers and passages of fiction; document literacy – the ability to use timetables, graphs, charts and forms; and quantitative literacy – the ability to solve maths problems by picking out numbers found in texts.

The findings show a distinct polarisation among the British population, with a relatively high proportion with either the lowest or highest skill levels.

The trend was similar in

Canada and the United States – the two other English-speaking countries in the study.

On all three literacy scales, a higher proportion of people aged 45 and over fell into the lowest literacy category than among younger age groups – flying in the face of common claims of declining basic skills standards.

The survey also confirmed past findings that literacy skills are poorer among those with lower levels of education and among people who are out of work or in lower-skilled occupations.

However, it revealed that, even among those at the lowest literacy level, the majority questioned considered their skills to be adequate for daily life.

Alan Wells, director of the Basic Skills Unit, one of the bodies sponsoring the survey, said it showed the problem was worse than had been thought.

He called for a campaign to improve adult literacy, saying:

"I think the Government's priorities are right, and it is important to get basic skills right first time, but you can't afford to neglect parents and grandparents who are going to have a major impact on the skills of their children."

Welcoming the survey, Mr Blunkett said: "Sound literacy and numeracy skills provide the bedrock for all subsequent learning."

The Government has appointed an advisory group on adult learning, and we will publish a policy paper on lifelong learning before the end of the year.



Learning zone: Fay Bullivant recognised she had a problem, and enrolled on an adult literacy course

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

The Link

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'We were afraid to say we didn't understand'

Until two years ago, Fay Bullivant carried a pocket dictionary everywhere she went, writes Lucy Ward. She was terrified that, without her lifeline, even writing a simple note or filling in a form might expose her struggles with spelling and punctuation, covering her in shame and embarrassment.

Fay began to conquer her fear, only when, at the age of 48, she mustered the courage to enrol on an adult literacy course and began slowly to fill in the gaps in her learning that had sapped her confidence since school.

"I was one of the many adults who didn't have a very good education," said Fay, who intended

ed a convent school in the East End of London and now lives in Havering. "In my day, if you weren't up and running you were left on the heap. We were brought up afraid to speak up and say we didn't understand."

Leaving school at 15 with no qualifications, Fay became a machinist for a garment firm, wary of trying any job requiring literacy skills. "I went into the rag-trade because these were jobs where I could use my hands and not my brain. There were many people like me. I used to say I couldn't have stood being shut up in an office all the time, but really that was just an excuse."

Wherever possible, Fay would avoid situations where her writing or spelling would be tested.

In 1995, a leaflet through the door from Havering Basic Skills Service provided the impulse for change. Despite fears of embarrassment, Fay signed up, and, two years on, has passed GSCE English and a word-power qualification.

Now beginning training as an aromatherapist, she advises others with literacy difficulties to face up to the problem. "I've gained enormous confidence. I know I've still got a long way to go, but I've got the determination to stick at it."

Education bodies get a health check

Judith Judd
Education Editor

A dozen education authorities will be inspected from January next year as part of the Government's crusade to raise standards. Schools were judged on 11-year-old national test results and GCSE results.

In London, the worst are Southwark and Tower Hamlets. Kingston-upon-Thames is the best and Brent the median. Among metropolitan authorities, Manchester and Sandwell, West Midlands, are worst. Bury and Sunderland the median. Among shire counties, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire are worst, Surrey best and Kent the median.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, believes that efficient local education authorities have a crucial part to play and the education Bill to be introduced this autumn will give them more power.

But Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, said that inspections might show that local authorities had no impact on school standards. A recent inspection of Barking and Dagenham had revealed that while the schools performed badly, the authority functioned well.

Unlike schools, authorities will not be graded. Mr Blunkett has said that he will take new powers to take over failing authorities, but at present no legal definition of a failing authority exists. Teams of in-

spectors from the standards office will visit each authority and question schools at the services the council provides.

Mr Woodhead said: "We think that it is important for all aspects of the education service to be subject to rigorous external scrutiny. We are shining a spotlight very sharply on what an authority is doing to raise standards in schools."

Mr Blunkett said: "The programme of inspections and published reports will allow comparisons of performance to be made ... If an authority does not meet the required standard, I will not hesitate to intervene." Inspectors will also examine the role of elected councillors in raising standards.

Ofted has already carried out pilot reviews of some authorities at their invitation. A report on the London Borough of Hackney, inspected at the request of the Secretary of State, is due out next week.

Heads' union submits pay claim to end crisis

Lucy Ward

Head teachers' leaders yesterday submitted a 10 per cent pay claim – treble the rate of inflation – and insisted that only a substantial rise would reverse a growing recruitment crisis.

The salaries of heads and deputies had fallen significantly behind those of managers in comparable posts in both the public and private sectors, said the National Association of Head Teachers.

The union, which last week published figures showing a dramatic drop in the number of applications for headship and deputy headships, said the decline was directly linked to inadequate pay for high-stress jobs.

The pay claim is certain to be resisted by the Government, which is keen to keep salary lev-

els down to prevent an inflationary spiral.

The NAHT demand would see heads of large secondary schools earning an average £54,000 – around £3,000 more than at present – and heads of large primaries around £39,000 – a rise of £4,500. Deputies would also win rises of around £3,000.

Low wages have led to a situation where at least 400 schools in England and Wales have been unable to recruit a permanent head teacher, according to NAHT figures.

General secretary David Hart said: "When the Chancellor of the Exchequer shortly publishes the Government's position on public sector pay, he must accept that recruitment problems have to be recognised in pay terms."

"Teachers will only apply for



Well prepared: A Scout wearing mask and gloves removes some of the freshly laid blooms from outside St James's Palace yesterday. Photograph: David Rose

Spencer has say on Diana memorial



Working together: Gordon Brown and Earl Spencer

Kim Sengupta

Gordon Brown, who is chairing a committee planning a memorial for Diana, Princess of Wales, yesterday met her brother, Earl Spencer, to ascertain the family's views on the project.

The Chancellor is keen to ensure that members of the family are fully consulted on every stage of the planning of the memorial, and that it should reflect the personal touch the Princess brought to her public duties.

Both the Prime Minister and Mr Brown are believed to favour a permanent tribute which would help continue the Princess's humanitarian work.

One of the ideas expected to be considered is the setting up of a national or international foundation in her name. This could be in addition to a physical tribute such as a statue.

Mr Brown has said the committee, the composition of which would be announced in the near future, should not be party political. He has also invited people to write to him in Downing Street or the Treasury, and asked for an e-mail address to be organised.

The amount of money available to honour the Princess's memory will be boosted by the Government's decision to give up its claim to VAT on the sales of copies of Elton John's new version of "Candle in the Wind". The tax, which could easily be more than £1m, would be passed on to the charity.

Sales of "Candle in the Wind" are expected to outstrip the 3.5 million copies of Band Aid's "Do They Know It's Christmas?" in 1984, and there are hopes the total revenue could be more than £10m.

The Chancellor has also asked the Inland Revenue to

Women jailed for Abbey thefts

Two women tourists who stole teddy bears and lions that had been left outside Westminster Abbey in tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales were jailed yesterday for four weeks.

Magistrate Roger Davies sitting at Highbury Road Magistrates Court in central London, said he had nothing to do with the women because, the police had made a charge against them.

Gently does it, as flowers are moved

Amanda Kelly

The painstaking and delicate task of clearing away the oceans of floral tributes left to Diana, Princess of Wales got under way yesterday.

Guides and Scouts were among the dozens of volunteers who started gently moving the flowers from the now dusty piles which line the walls of St James's Palace. It is expected to take up to six weeks to clear the tonnes of flowers, teddy bears and other tributes laid at sites all over the capital.

David Welch, chief executive of Royal Parks, the body overseeing the operation, said: "We are trying to do the job in the most sensitive way possible. We want to remove the flowers and tributes with the same spirit that they were laid. It really is a massive task and we have had to take on extra staff... to help with the work. There will be about 100 people working on the clean-up process every day."

Wearing plastic gloves, volunteers were carefully separating the freshly-laid blooms from the floods of decaying bundles and loading them on to a horse-drawn dray to be delivered to hospitals around London. The rest

were put into plastic buckets to be used as compost in the Palace's gardens.

Craig Huddleston, 13, of the 1st London Colney Scout Group, said: "It's a really sad job. I'd seen all the flowers on television but it's far more moving to be here in real life. Some of the messages people have written are lovely and it's amazing because they have come from people all over the world."

The labels, messages and cards were being taken to a site in Regent's Park and dried and stored until the Spencer family has decided how best to preserve them. Toys and other gifts will be distributed to a range of needy causes around the country.

Val Dorrin, of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, said: "There is a very melancholy atmosphere as we work. It is hard not to be moved as a lot of the messages are from children and they really bring a tear to the eye. The most touching tribute I've heard today was a picture with the words 'Our angel Princess Diana sitting on a cloud in heaven'."

The clearance operation is expected to begin at Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace today.

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8 news

Fox on the run evades the men from the ministry

Kathy Marks

A fox that has bitten five people in a Cornish fishing village is believed to be roaming the area, evading a Ministry of Agriculture team armed with dart guns and nets.

The Ministry sought to allay fears of a rabies scare in Mousehole, near Penzance, yesterday saying there was no evidence that the fox was rabid. However, it has advised victims to have a precautionary injection.

Reports that an injured fox had been found in a gutter in Penzance raised hopes yesterday that the culprit had been tracked down. But the RSPCA said it was not the same animal.

Five people, including a fisherman, have been bitten in Mousehole, a popular tourist spot, since last weekend.

Last Sunday, the fox cut a swathe through the quayside, possibly looking for offcuts of fish. After being shooed out of a gift shop by a man who received a vengeful nip on the ankle, it sank its teeth into a passer-by eating fish and chips near the harbour. It then repaired to a pub car park, where it ambushed a woman from

beneath her vehicle. Mousehole has a thriving population, but attacks on people are highly unusual. The RSPCA said that the fox was probably hungry rather than rabid.

"It sounds like a tame animal that has lost its natural fear of humans," said a spokeswoman. "Or it may be that it has been fed regularly for a while, and then abandoned."

A team of seven people – two Ministry vets, two public health officers, two council "trappers" and an animal biologist – has been prowling popular haunts of foxes in Mousehole after dusk. But their quarry appears to have gone to ground.

The fox discovered on the seafront in Penzance had been hit by a car and was concussed. Having made a full recovery, it has been ruled out of inquiries.

"It is an ordinary RTA (road traffic accident) fox," said Les Sutton, the RSPCA's chief inspector for Cornwall. "Besides, to travel to Penzance it would have had to negotiate an awful lot of traffic and find its way around the streets."

Devon and Cornwall police said they would send a marksman to shoot the fox if found.



Hunted harbour: the Cornish fishing village of Mousehole where terror, in the form of a fox which attacks people, stalks the streets. Photograph: Simon Burt / Western Morning News



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BT It's good to talk



Ashdown takes 'Yes' message to Wales

Tony Heath

Co-operation, not confrontation was the politics of the future, Paddy Ashdown declared yesterday, throwing his weight behind the Welsh "Yes" campaign.

Surrounded by a platoon of party workers, the Liberal Democrat leader, arrived in Wales by "battle bus" yesterday to spread the message that devolution is a good thing. He chose a Brecon factory specialising in the manufacture of conveyors as a launch pad.

The choice of the mid-Wales town was significant; it is the heart of the Brecon and Radnorshire constituency which witnessed scenes of jubilation on 2 May when the Liberal Democrat Richard Llwyd defeated the incumbent Tory Jonathan Evans leaving Wales a Tory-free zone.

The Liberal Democrats now allied with Labour and Plaid Cymru are engaged in a struggle that looks like being much closer than the general election contest in which Mr Llwyd triumphed by 5,097 votes.

But Mr Ashdown was not fazed. "Talking to people in Pontypridd on my way here I found real enthusiasm for a 'Yes' vote next Thursday," he said.

Co-operation between the three parties in favour of devolution demonstrated that old-style confrontations went out of the window when a common adjective was in the sights.

Touring the Nerauk-Wiese factory on Brecon's Ffrwd-grech Industrial Estate, he donned a face mask to try his hand at paint spraying and walked past a machine permanently labelled "Do All Job Selector" – an omen perhaps for aspiring Welsh assembly men and women. If all goes well on 18 September, 60 newly minted WAPs (Welsh Assembly Persons) will be taking their seats in a couple of years time.

The "Yes" campaign was joined by a Spanish exponent of devolution's virtues, Juan Colom, an MEP from Catalonia was canvassing in the valleys as the guest of Wayne David, MEP for South Wales Central. Last night, he was due to share the platform with John Prescott at a rally in Llantrisant.

Catalonia was one of the up-and-coming regions of Europe, an enthusiastic Mr David explained. "Ten years ago there were calls for Catalonia to secede from Spain. There is very little call for that now – devolution has reinforced the integrity of the Spanish state."

The "Yes" camp criticised the ICM poll published in the *Guardian* earlier this week, it predicted a very close result. Between 4 and 8 September, 502 voters were interviewed – about half the number normally considered large enough to reflect opinion accurately.

Darren Hill, national organiser of the "Yes" campaign, said: "It seems somewhat bizarre to hold a poll during the time when mourning over the death of Diana, Princess of Wales was at its height. We are not surprised that people's minds were not on politics during that time."

The future of at least one Welsh university could be jeopardised by a "Yes" vote in next week's referendum, a leading academic claimed yesterday.

Derek Llwyd Morgan, vice-Chancellor and Principal of University of Wales Aberystwyth,



Paddy Ashdown: Found real enthusiasm for 'Yes' vote

said he was concerned by the lack of clarity in the White Paper on plans to transfer power from Westminster to an elected Welsh Assembly.

Although broadly in favour of devolution, he was concerned at the possible impact on universities like Aberystwyth, Lampeter and Bangor.

In an article in the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, he questioned whether a Cardiff-based assembly would sustain funding for its universities in rural areas for the sake of their local economies.

Many questions about the provision of funding for Higher Education after a "Yes" vote had been left unanswered. Current government proposals were likely to encourage students to study closer to home, which could have a devastating effect on many Welsh colleges and universities.

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Roman robe: Ann Murray rehearses the title-role in Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, the first Royal Opera production at the Barbican Centre, in London

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Orchestra struggles to fill Solti's shoes

Clare Garner

The death of Sir Georg Solti has thrown the orchestral world into disarray. Not only has the legendary 84-year-old Hungarian conductor's passing resulted in some short-term logistical nightmares, but it has, in the longer term, left a vacuum which may not be filled for generations.

Whilst Sir Colin Davis has agreed to step in at the eleventh hour, to conduct Verdi's *Réquiem* at the Proms tonight, the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) has not yet found a stand-in for later this month when Sir Georg was due to conduct Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at its opening night at the Royal Festival Hall on 24 September.

The latter has been turned into a tribute in honour of Sir Georg with a pre-concert discussion on his life and work in the auditorium hosted by his wife, Valerie Pitts. Although celebrated conductors would jump



Solti: LPO concert in his memory has no conductor

at the chance to conduct on such an historic occasion – Sir Georg first conducted in England when making records with the LPO, and was the orchestra's principal conductor between 1979 and 1983 – they are

committed to conducting other concerts.

"We've got not a lot of time and we still haven't been able to name a conductor," said a spokeswoman for the LPO. "The world-wide search goes on. Obviously one wants one of the high-profile conductors and they are all terribly, terribly busy and booked up years ahead."

Looking ahead, the question is: "Who will replace the grand maestro?" In many ways, Sir Georg, who was nicknamed "the Screaming Skull" on account of his volatility in rehearsals, is irreplaceable. As Bill Holland, divisional director of Polygram Classics, which owns Decca, Sir Georg's record label, put it: "His stature is so unique. He was the last of a particular breed. Along with Bernstein and Karajan, Solti was the last of the titans".

If you're trying to act as a conduit between the music and the public, you're the person who reads the page and interprets it," Mr Holland said. "No matter how good or how musical your mind might be, unless you can really communicate the intentions of the composer to the listener there's something missing. The really great conductors could make the music come alive in a very distinctive way – and Solti was one of them."

Publisher of 'vile and evil' race hate magazine is sent to jail

The publisher of a "vile and evil" race hate magazine responsible for a terrifying campaign against Frank Bruno's mother, was jailed for 21 months yesterday.

Mark Atkinson, 31, a leading member of the far-right Combat 18 group, was caught "red-handed" with hundreds of copies of *Stormer* just before they were dispatched to subscribers across Britain. Another issue of the 12-page production, which preaches violence and death towards Jews, blacks, left-wingers, and anyone else who dares disagree with its views, was found on a computer disk.

Judge George Bathurst-Norman told Southwark Crown Court that in 37 years in the legal profession he had "never encountered such vile outpourings of hatred and incitement to violence as revealed in these magazines. From reading them Combat 18's purpose is clearly aimed at stirring up racial hatred and violence, not only against racial, ethnic and religious minorities and their supporters within our society but also targeting and naming specific individuals within those sections.

He told Atkinson: "I have to say to you and any others like you that those who seek to spread such evil discord in our midst can expect no mercy from the courts."

One of his victims had been Lynette Bruno, the 67-year-old mother of the former world heavyweight boxing champion.

In disclosing her name and address and stirring up racial hatred against her, Mrs Bruno doesn't deserve to live."

The judge said Parliament had used the maximum penalty for publishing material of this type at just two years.

It may be that Parliament should look again at the activities of people such as you and others like you who are minded to indulge in such activities and reconsider whether the present maximum sentence is sufficient. In my view it is not."

On Wednesday, Robin Gray, 35, a former National Front by-election candidate who lived with Atkinson, was convicted of possessing *Stormer* with a view to distributing it. Sentence was adjourned for reports.

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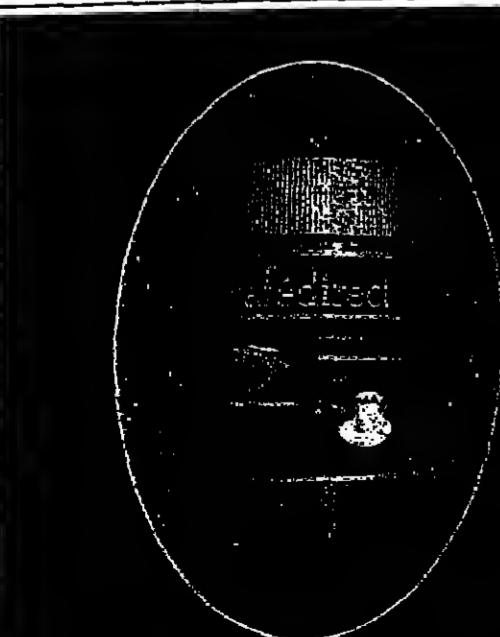
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news

Confusion reigns as Clark turns TV eye on Tory party

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Today's Conservative Party is suffering from "considerable confusion", Alan Clark, the Tory MP and historian, said yesterday.

The first episode of BBC2's four-part *Alan Clark's History of the Tory Party* will be shown on Sunday. It tells the story of the pre-war years, from the creation of the modern party in 1922 through to the start of the Second World War in 1939.

Mr Clark's analysis is typically pungent. He argues that Baldwin turned the abdication crisis into a golden opportunity to dispose of a troublesome king; he criticises a Foreign Office mandarin for spurning a Nazi offer to sue for peace on the eve of war; and he compares the task of leading the Tories to "driving pigs to market".

After a preview of the first episode, *Gentlemen Players*, Mr

Clark said yesterday: "There is no doubt that the Tory party at the present time is in a state of considerable confusion."

He was unable to give William Hague a historical rating as Conservative leader, because it was too early, but then added: "I didn't vote for him, as you well know." Asked whether it was not the leader's job to resolve confusion, Mr Clark said: "You may think that, but I could not possibly comment."

In the programme, delivered with all the languid charm that Mr Clark brought to his best-selling *Diaries*, he says that the 1936 abdication was a heaven-sent opportunity to get rid of Edward VIII that was grabbed by the Conservatives and the British Establishment.

"For Baldwin, as for the rest of the British Establishment," he says, "Mrs Simpson was an opportunity disguised as a cri-



Gentleman player: Alan Clark at yesterday's preview. Asked about the party leader's role, he replied: 'You may think that, but I could not possibly comment' Photograph: David Rose

sis. For the last 10 years they had been racking their brains concerning what should be done about the Prince of Wales.

"He was selfish, erratic, impatient of protocol and prone to left-wing enthusiasms. The

abdication was the last great Establishment coup dressed up as high-mindedness. If Baldwin had really wanted, he could have kept Edward on the throne."

Mr Clark said yesterday: "The Tory party committed at this

concept that the monarchy is disposable – because they regarded Edward VIII as a bloody nuisance." But he suggested that the breach of the hereditary principle perpetrated in 1936 was being repeated with

the curious endorsement of the current monarch, with her acceptance of Labour plans for reform of the House of Lords.

Mr Clark says that Hitler and the pre-war Tories had much in common: both being "brutal

and anti-Semitic". He was also critical of Sir Frank Roberts, a Foreign Office official who did not even pass on to ministers a Nazi approach to avert war.

Mr Clark said yesterday that at that juncture, in 1939, it was

madness to declare war on Germany. "To put an army into Europe against the Wehrmacht was just suicide; it was mad."

The war had only been won because of a totally unpredictable chain of events, he said.

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Bodies on rail lines left in full view

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

station and that there had been ample time for the body to be covered up. "Initially our driver was told to pass over the incident with extreme caution, but then a Railtrack official instructed him to hurry up and get past the scene as quickly as possible."

"They allowed no dignity whatsoever to the poor soul who had been killed. They showed no regard for the trauma they were causing to everyone who saw these appalling sights. The whole incident was an absolute disgrace."

The union contends that the drive for profits in the privatised rail industry has led to greater pressure on drivers to pass over bodies. Where there are delays financial penalties have to be paid either by Railtrack or the train operating company, depending on which was responsible for the delay.

Mr Adams said the union would be demanding changes to the industry's rule book which would stop railway workers and customers from seeing such "offensive gruesome scenes". He said trains should be halted until the incident had been properly dealt with.

Current procedures were "inhuman and obscene", he said, and it was dangerous to subject people to such experiences.

Replying to Mr Adams' criticisms, a Railtrack spokesman said: "We are reviewing how to handle these situations. We have to strike a balance between respect for the deceased and the fact that trains loaded with people are stuck on the line. We are not unfeeling."

DAILY POEM

The Reader

By Rainer Maria Rilke
(translated by Stephen Cohn)

Who knows this stranger who has turned his face away from life to live another life – which nothing interrupts except the swift and forceful turning of each printed page?

Even a mother might not recognise her son, lost in the world that lies below him, steeped in his own shadow. What can we know – who live our lives so governed by mere hours –

of other lives he may have lived and lost before he looks up, heavy now and burdened with all the matter which his book contains? As children rise from play and look around his eyes now turn to all that lies outside, towards the world again made manifest; but yet his face, for all its discipline, will never while he lives change back again.

"The Reader" completes our selection from Stephen Cohn's translation of Rainer Maria Rilke's New Poems, which first appeared in German in 1907-08. *Neue Gedichte/ New Poems* is published by Carecanet (£29.95) in a bilingual edition, with an introduction by John Bayley.

China prepares for 'the third emancipation of the mind' – which could mean mass redundancies



Bloom time: A worker in Peking unloading decorations for the party congress which begins today. Delegates are set to agree huge changes in economic policy. Photograph: AFP

Deft words to speak the unspeakable



Jiang Zemin: Still in the primary stage of socialism?

Some deft semantic manoeuvring will be on show as the Communist Party tiptoes around the reality that public ownership will no longer be the dominant force in the economy.

Today President Jiang Zemin will resurrect the idea that China is still in "the primary stage of socialism". This formulation was first put forward at the 13th party congress in 1987 by the reformist party secretary, Zhao Ziyang.

Translated into plain-speak, the phrase means that China is free to employ whatever capitalist tools it desires in order to progress down the modernising road to a socialist future. It may be a long journey; China has admitted this "primary stage" can last 100 years.

This congress's second linguistic contribution pledges the country to "hold high the great banner of Deng Xiaoping's the-

enshrine the policy that market forces have an central role in Chinese socialism – and to justify the fact that some people were getting richer much faster than others.

This being the first congress since Mr Deng's death in February, Mr Jiang's plan for state-owned enterprises is being touted as the big ideological contribution to the post-Deng era. It was described as "the third emancipation of the mind" by Li Junru, the deputy director of the party's "theory bureau". Mr Deng's 1978 "seek truth from facts" and his 1992 "socialism with Chinese characteristics" qualifying as the first two "emancipations".

One phrase which will not be on anyone's lips in 1997 is "iron rice bowl", the former cradle-to-grave guarantee of social welfare. That one has gone right out of fashion.

ory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics". This is Sino-speak for China sticking to the reform and opening policies Mr Deng launched in 1978. The expression "socialism with Chinese characteristics" was coined at the 1992 party congress, to

mark the 10th anniversary of Deng's "reform and opening".

Peking ready for world's ultimate privatisation

Reports from Teresa Poole in Peking

China is set to close the book on socialist economic dogma today by abandoning state ownership of industry as the sacred doctrine of government policy. President Jiang Zemin will this morning open the 15th Communist Party Congress with a speech paving the way for what could turn into the world's biggest and most ambitious privatisation programme. There is just one proviso – no one is allowed to call it that.

Mr Jiang will give the green light for most state-owned factories to turn themselves into shareholding or limited liability companies, or find other ways to survive in the market economy. The implications are real: last year almost half China's state-owned enterprises were in the red, but in the brave new world of Chinese corporatisation, loss-making factories will no longer automatically be bailed out by the state, a decision which puts millions of jobs at risk.

Before the first years of the next century, China now plans to sell off, merge, lease out, or close down more than 300,000 state-owned enterprises. Many of these will be turned into shareholding companies, with shares owned by employees, the public, foreign companies or

state units. Often the state will retain a majority holding. Successful companies will then try to list their shares on China's popular stock exchanges. Around 3,000 of the large and medium-sized state-owned enterprises – those in strategic defence, and transport sectors – will remain in state hands.

Socialist political sensitivities are still very tender on the question of state ownership, and hence the denial of the dreaded "p" word. The official Chi-

na Daily yesterday insisted no

one should be "simple-minded"

enough to equate the modern corporate system and the shareholding system with privatisation.

It is all a matter of interpretation: China's new definition of "public ownership" would probably cover many companies on the London Stock Exchange.

In some parts of the country,

this reform process has been under way for several years and thousands of smaller enter-

prises have already been bailed off. Party congresses, which take place only once every five years, are often a forum for ideological catch-up. The breakthrough today will bring the orthodox political jargon into line with reality. Stick-in-the-mud old-fashioned cadres who still hanker after the securities of a centrally planned economy will be ordered to get on with reform.

The Chinese government remains very scared about what

Unemployment may destroy reforms

Unemployment is the biggest political risk facing the Chinese government as it attempts to sort out the economy.

There are 110 million state employees in China, when 49 million are urban industry workers. Over-manning is such that probably one-third of these factory workers are not needed, and will no longer be wanted by managers who know their factories must sink or swim. Add to this a bureaucracy bloated by millions of surplus cadres, and China's job crunch is clear. None of these figures include the officially estimated 175 million unemployed rural workers, many of whom migrate to the cities and grab any menial jobs going.

Optimists nevertheless argue that now is the best time for China to reform the state sector. Inflation is low and economic growth is high, so the hope is that a buoyant economy will mop up these workers. Cities such as Shanghai have set up job

retraining centres, in one case encouraging laid-off middle-aged female staff to work as private cleaning ladies for the growing middle class. The

Chinese entrepreneurial tradition encourages the more capable individuals to "xia hai" (leap into the sea of business) as street traders or running food stalls.

Pessimists say there are just too many people who need to find proper jobs, and that many big loss-makers are in remote areas where alternative work is not available. The government is very worried, because disgruntled workers are increasingly letting their feelings be known. The past two years have seen a growing number of strikes and riots by people who have lost their jobs and have not received salaries. In Sichuan province earlier this year, 20,000 unpaid textile workers staged a demonstration in Nanchong, one of the largest displays of anger so far.

state enterprise reform might mean for millions of surplus workers. But, after years of pilot schemes and half-hearted efforts, it now accepts the urgent need to tackle the drain on the economy. The World Bank recently warned that failure to address enterprise reform could "corrode the very foundations and credibility of China's entire economic regime".

Nearly two decades of economic reform has seen the rise of the private and collective sectors in China. This has left state-owned industry's share of gross domestic product at only 30 per cent, but the dire financial situation of many enterprises means that the state sector is soaking up a disproportionate 75 per cent of domestic credit. The money has been disappearing into a seemingly bottomless hole.

Mr Jiang's speech will lay down the broad principles for future state enterprise reform, but the detail will take much longer to unfold. The financial challenges are immense. The so-called "triangular debts" between state enterprises have reached £80bn, and further bad debts are on the books of China's banks. For the officials in charge, it will be like trying to unscramble a rotten omelette.

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Palestinians need a break, says Albright

Patrick Cockburn
Ramallah

The US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called on Israel yesterday to take a "time-out" from settlement activity and other unilateral actions that have angered Palestinians.

"Israel should refrain from unilateral acts including what Palestinians perceive as the provocative expansion of settlements, land confiscation, home demolitions, and confiscation of IDs," she told Israeli high school students.

"We believe that a time-out from these kind of unilateral actions will create a climate in which an accelerated approach can succeed in achieving a final Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement." Mrs Albright said in comments certain to anger Israel's right-wing government.

Earlier, Palestinians listened with disappointment to the total priority given by Mrs Albright to Israeli security in her three-hour talk with Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader.

"We have got agreement that terrorists are terrible, but not yet on the best way to get the peace process back on track." Mrs Albright said at a joint press conference with Mr Arafat. Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, said: "The gap between us and the Israeli government is as wide as ever."

The duet from Mrs Albright and Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, about dealing with "terrorism" – and regarding the expansion of Israeli settlements and demolition of Palestinian houses on the West Bank as peripheral – was interrupted by Leah Rabin, the widow of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister assassinated in 1995.

"I have doubts about how much terrorism can be uprooted," she told Israeli radio before seeing Mrs Albright. "We were also terrorists once and they didn't uproot us and we went on dealing in terrorist activities. Despite all the efforts of the British army in the land we went on with terrorism."



Yasser Arafat: stalemate over the peace process

the president was quoted out of context. Likud is threatening to run a candidate against him in the next presidential election.

Just why the Palestinian leader would find it difficult to start mass arrests of Hamas was best explained by the presidential troops guarding the gate. "Albright only talks about Israeli security, but each one of us has a brother in an Israeli jail," said Inaz, pointing to a scar on his head made by an M-16 round in the fighting in Ramallah last September.

Jamil, another member of the presidential guard, said he found Mrs Albright's visit humiliating and, in the long term, he expected more fighting.

Mrs Albright was referring primarily to the campaign of the Irgun, led by Menachem Begin, which waged guerrilla war against British forces in Palestine in the 1940s. Mr Begin later became prime minister of Israel and leader of the Likud party which is now headed by Mr Netanyahu. Asked if the latter wanted peace Mrs Albright said: "Allow me to express doubt. He does everything against it."

One concession to Palestinian grievances came over the issue of £66 million tax revenues collected by Israel for the Palestinian Authority and withheld since the suicide bombing in Jerusalem on 30 July. Mrs Albright said it was "beyond her understanding how withholding money was a security issue". Mr Netanyahu said he was waiting to see action by Mr Arafat before handing over the money.

Most of the Palestinian demands concern Israel implementing the Interim Agreement signed in 1995 under which it pledged to end the occupation of most of the West Bank. They also want an end to the present closure of Palestinian towns and villages isolated by Israeli checkpoints. Israel wants a round-up of activists in Hamas, the Islamic militant organisation, by Mr Arafat.

The Likud party has reacted angrily to reports that President Ezer Weizman told Mrs Albright "to knock heads together" and to ask Mr Netanyahu to implement the interim Agreement. Although officials say



Talking terrorism: Benjamin Netanyahu and Madeleine Albright, wearing a gold peace dove brooch given to her by Yitzhak Rabin's widow Leah, after their meeting yesterday in which the US Secretary of State said Israeli security was paramount

Photograph: Jim Hollander / Reuters

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significant shorts

Germany set to release last Communist leader

A German court ruled yesterday that Egon Krenz, the last hardline communist leader in East Germany, could be released from jail pending an appeal against a conviction for manslaughter.

Krenz was found guilty last month in connection with the deaths of refugees killed during Communist rule as they tried to flee over the Berlin Wall. He was jailed, although the verdict was not yet legally binding, because authorities feared he would flee. But his lawyers argued during yesterday's hearing that Krenz, 60, had never failed to appear during his 18-month trial, proving that there was no reason to suppose he would attempt to leave the country or go into hiding at this stage. *Reuters - Berlin*

Kenyan reforms agreed

Opposition and ruling party legislators in Kenya agreed on a series of crucial legal and constitutional reforms that could ease tensions ahead of elections this year.

Some opposition legislators, however, condemned their negotiations as a public relations exercise by the ruling Kenya African National Union (Kanu), and an attempt by President Daniel arap Moi to weaken a pro-democracy movement. The 36 opposition and 38 Kanu legislators agreed to amend or repeal, within a month, 12 colonial-era laws that reformists say give Moi, 74, a competitive edge in seeking his fifth five-year term. *AP - Nairobi*

US takes anti-mine stance

The United States said it was committed to multi-national talks to set up a global treaty to ban anti-personnel landmines even though it may not sign the formal anti-mine treaty in Ottawa in December. The US is among 120 countries participating in a 19-day conference in Oslo to hammer out a draft treaty to ban the use, production, sale and stocks of landmines. *Reuters - Oslo*

Afghanistan truce appeal

The United Nations renewed an appeal for a truce in Afghanistan as rivals fought for control of the northern opposition capital of Mazar-i-Sharif for a third day. Jets from both sides made bombing runs, and opposition forces fired at least five rockets at Kabul without causing casualties. *Reuters - Kabul*

Race to arm South Africa

At least four more countries have entered a race to sell naval vessels and aircraft to South Africa, according to Ronnic Kasrils, the country's Deputy Defence Minister. He told reporters and diplomats that Canada, Brazil, Sweden and Italy had joined Britain, Germany, France and Spain in bidding for contracts. *Reuters - Cape Town*

UN soldiers' Angolan disgrace

Ten Dutch United Nations peace-keepers accused of sexual misconduct, drug smuggling and drunkenness in Angola have been stripped of their medals. The Defence Ministry announced the decision was prompted by last week's revelation that four Dutch soldiers had been involved, since 1991, in sexual relationships with local women, some possibly underage, while serving as part of a UN peace-keeping mission. *AP - The Hague*

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The hidden dangers of China's capitalist road

The Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping famously declared: "To get rich is glorious." Since then, millions of Chinese have taken him at his word. Rolls-Royces, luxurious villas, mobile phones. From the mega-rich to the merely affluent, China is full of signs that capitalism is not - to put it mildly - officially perceived as the incarnation of all evil that it used to be.

The entrepreneur is king in China today. Many years ago, Deng (an occasional master of the soundbite) declared in defence of quasi-capitalist practices: "It does not matter if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice." That is truer than ever in Peking today: as long as the economy is booming, don't ask any tricky questions about the how and why. Bizarrely, however, Chinese officialdom insists that the cat (black or white) should be classified as a dog.

What seems on the face of it to be a partly capitalist economy is claimed to be capitalist at all. It is merely a socialist economy "with Chinese characteristics". This is one of a series of unusual classifications that Communists have indulged in over the years. "War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength," George Orwell imagined it. The Chinese Communist Party continues to make it real. In the Soviet Union in the Brezhnev era, all problems were due to the fact that Communism had not yet arrived. A version

of "developed socialism" was all that the country had achieved so far. As our Peking correspondent notes on page 11, similar semantic games have repeatedly been played in China. If anything remains imperfect in China today, this is merely because China is still in the throes of "the primary stage of socialism" (which may last for another 100 years or so), rather than the utopian Communism that will come along in due course. If there seems to be a slight contradiction between the go-getting excitement about money-making, on the one hand, and the declared belief in Communism, on the other, this can quickly be resolved by reference to "socialism with Chinese characteristics".

But all the semantic curiosities fail to mask the very real difficulties that the Chinese regime still faces. Indeed, the use of such Orwellian phrases emphasises the contradictions and tensions that remain - between a partly liberal economy, on the one hand, and distinctly unilateral politics, on the other.

In many respects, China today is a freely entrepreneurial society. The Chinese are allowed, even encouraged, to go out and enrich themselves. Where the Soviet Union remained wary to the very last of successful business people, China has embraced both foreign and Chinese tycoons as potential saviours.

But the Communist Party remains a power in the land, alongside the entre-

preneurs. Often, indeed, it controls them. It sometimes seems that this is a workable partnership. The experience of the years since the massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989 shows that there need be no contradiction between political repression on the one hand, and economic boom on the other. China's economy has performed far better than many much more liberal regimes elsewhere in the world. Growth has affected not just the very rich, but has also raised the average standard of living for those at the bottom of the heap.

Given such success, and the apparent

strength of the party itself, there seems to be no obvious reason why one-party rule should ever come to an end. After all, as we are seeing again this week, the Communist Party is perfectly able to reinvent itself, and its dogmas. The economy has already moved from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism-Dengism. It could become one of the great political congas of all time, with yet more names being added to the wriggling line every few years, and each name in the pantheon merely interpreting the same fundamental truths for their generation.

Communist Party leaders have made it clear that they see no reason why the political fundamentals of the system should change. They still want to be able to lock up anybody who says the wrong thing - whatever that happens to be on any given day. Quite apart from the strength of the economy, there are other reasons why this may seem unlikely to change. China has long lived with a lack of democracy. Even now, there is little obvious pressure for radical change. People in the cities and countryside alike are more interested in talking about how to make money than talking about politics - even behind closed doors. If the economy continues to grow, China may be eager to demonstrate its national political and military muscle on the regional stage, which would also help to ensure unity at home.

The pressures of Tiananmen Square are, however, not forgotten. Even officials say that if the subject were stirred up, it would still be explosive. More immediately relevant is that it seems impossible that all economic change - including the wide-ranging privatisation of industry that is being proposed at this week's Communist Party Congress - can take place without pain. Charmingly, the official line insists that this is not really privatisation at all (that would be "simple-minded"). But privatisation by any other name is just as painful. Job losses tend to be accom-

panied by dissatisfaction with the political masters who have imposed the pain. Such dissatisfaction is difficult for the authorities to ride out, if they do not have the political legitimacy that comes with electoral consent. Sporadic strikes in China could easily grow. All of which means that Communist power is not necessarily eternal. Unthinkable though it now seems, the conga may eventually end. And then, many things will be called by their real names.

Welcome to the tolerant society

A minister of the Crown comes out as a lesbian, and scarcely a head turns. But "Nation Muddy Intrigued" is good news. Last week the pukka commentary on Diana's funeral referred in passing to Elton John's partner as he arrived at the Abbey. As Angela Eagle rightly observed, attitudes have changed - certainly since the hostility stirred by Maureen Lipman, the first "out" lesbian MP, in the Seventies. For us, the story is as much the reality of acceptance as the coming-out itself - interesting though it naturally is when we learn something we didn't know about a public figure. Another small step towards a modern, tolerant society.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Worries south of the border as Scots vote

Sir: The current focus on the Scottish and Welsh devolution debates highlights the ambivalent feelings many of us in the North have towards our "Englishness".

From the times of the initial Anglo-Saxon settlements, through the Danelaw and onwards, the people of northern England have often had more in common with the Scots than with their southern compatriots. More important than historical variations of dialect, place-names and so on, are the profound differences in the type of society we wish to live in.

As in Scotland, throughout the 1980s people here overwhelmingly rejected the selfish, individualist ethos of Thatcherism. The political colour map clearly showed the very different concerns of these two, separate Britains. Trades unionism and friendly societies are hardly the natural bedfellows of "Essex man". Many of us will be hoping our turn will come.

STAFFORD HIGGINBOTTOM
School of Biological Sciences
Manchester University

Sir: To assert, as David Walker does ("Why the Scots need the English", 8 September) that "everything to do with being Scottish is about not being English" is a gross exaggeration.

Scots do not nowadays "keep singing about huts and bens and glens", at least not as often as Mr Walker seems to think.

Many Scots have sought careers in England, but not by any means all of those mentioned by Mr Walker have done so, and it is questionable whether those that did would have said that they had "had to make it in London". David Hume did indeed visit London on several occasions but said that "the little Company, there, that is worth conversing with, are cold and unsociable nor are warm'd only by Factio and Cabal", and that "that nation are relapsing fast into the deepest Stupidity, Christianity and Ignorance". But in Paris, "a man who distinguishes himself in Letters, meets immediately with Regard and Attention".

Robert Louis Stevenson did not like late Calvinist Edinburgh, but spent more time in France. America and Samoa than in London.

James Boswell did eventually attempt, unsuccessfully, to make a living at the English Bar. However, his encounters with Dr Johnson occurred during visits to London while he was practising at the Scottish Bar.

Harry Lauder's songs contained a good deal of tartan sentimentality, but neither of him nor of Lewis Grassic Gibbon, nor of many other modern Scots writers could it reasonably be said that "blaming and bemoaning the English is an old and much-loved ritual".

ROBERT L C HUNTER
Inverurie, Grampian

Union rights for the clergy

Sir: Your attack on MSF in your leading article of 10 September is quite unfounded.

We are clearly on record as supporting both Tony Blair and John Monks on union modernisation, and indeed MSF has successfully proposed just such a modernisation package to the TUC

on Monday. Our agenda for the future dovetails with the new government and the TUC by being positive about individual rights and responsibilities.

You have confused the issue of the rights of an individual to professional representation with the rapidly changing and highly stressful world of work with a claim, which your editorial invented, of MSF bargaining rights for all clergy.

We do not claim to speak for non-members of MSF. It is individual rights which are at the heart of this debate. And on this MSF, the TUC, the Government, the Archbishop and most reasonable employers are united.

I therefore unreservedly welcome Lambeth Palace's announcement of a review of their recognition arrangements for clergy.

ROGER LYONS
General Secretary
MSF
London EC1

Call of sea transport

Sir: The recent discussion about traffic has been concerned, for the most part, with the need to reduce congestion and pollution caused by road users. Improvements in internal combustion engines can reduce pollution and will also reduce energy consumption. Nevertheless they will depend for the foreseeable future on fossil fuels.

Transport by water is more efficient than all alternatives except pipeline in terms of energy consumed per tonne-kilometre:

compared with pipeline, water transport consumes about 2.5 times as much energy, rail 4 times, road 17 times and air 94 times.

In the 18th century nearly all freight was carried by water. Coastal shipping connected all major cities and estuaries; rivers and canals connected ports, inland towns, natural resources such as coal, china clay and ores, and oysters developing industrial areas.

Nineteenth century railways and 20th century road transport have eliminated nearly all of this traffic. Most surviving canals have had no development for over 150 years and are now used mainly for leisure.

The cost of improving and maintaining them for commercial traffic would be very high. Nevertheless the most useful waterway survives, it is our sea, which is within 90km or so of all parts of the UK and connects with the rest of the world.

A policy for integrated transport should include a study of development of coastal freight traffic into estuaries and provision of links with estuarial ports; these links are likely to be by railway. In the meantime, new structures that might inhibit such developments, such as low bridges across waterways and over-development of port areas should be prevented.

DONALD McDOWELL
Chairman
Permanent International Association of Navigation Congresses
British National Committee
London SW1

Dire predicament of celebrities

Sir: Anne Treneman writes, in her piece (11 September) about the heat-seeking novelist Martin Amis complaining about the heat,

"There are too many answers in a celebrity-crazed world in which fame and publicity are inextricably intertwined".

I agree, but would add that it is more pertinent fame and success which are intertwined and as long as the media are content to passively create coverage based on the relentless lobbying of expensive publicists, rather than digging for themselves for the real work being made, this lamentable "celebrity-crazed" state of affairs will continue.

Does this complaint entitle me to mention that my records can be bought direct online at www.knifepaper.com? DAVID KNOPFLER
Liss, Hampshire

Cycling through the forest

Sir: As a cyclist and a conservationist I welcome cyclists to the beautiful Forest of Dean. Not all Forest residents share the short-sighted and parochial view expressed in your article "Cyclists ride into a storm over journey to forest" (8 September).

Whereas I support the campaign for direct cycle routes between communities, I also congratulate

Forest Enterprise on the excellent work they have done to date. The cycleways help to preserve the historic railway and tramroad routes over which they are laid.

They also encourage people to visit and explore the Forest and bring their children to a place where they can develop a cycling habit in comparative safety.

I hope that in time better links can be developed to the National Cycle Trail, which goes through Chepstow, thereby encouraging people to cycle to and from the Forest. I also hope that the rail companies will change their policies and allow more than two bikes per train.

Not only does the Forest economy need tourism, environmentalists throughout the Country are campaigning for more people to use bikes. Surely this is not the time to be discouraging cycling.

G SINDREY
Coleford, Gloucestershire

Sir: Randeep Ramesh reports on cyclists travelling to the Forest by car. He states that an alternative is to travel by train to Chepstow. Today I have tried to book places for four bikes on the train from Chepstow to Birmingham, South Wales and West Rail inform me that only two places for bikes can be reserved on each train. So the problem is not that many cyclists see rail travel as old fashioned, but the absence of a service.

FRED ABBATT
Cowling, West Yorkshire

Republic without a figurehead

Sir: Based on the common misconception that republics need presidents, Donald Foreman and Gordon Medcalf (letters, 10 September) quote the chaotic horrors of pre-war Germany and the presidential misfortunes of the USA as arguments against abolishing the British monarchy.

But why would a people in their right minds wish to follow flawed models rather than learning from their own experience? The first time Britain was a republic (from 1649 to 1653) we did without a head of state until Oliver Cromwell became "King in all but name" from 1653 until his death in 1658, paving the way for the subsequent restoration of monarchy.

Over 300 years later, the UK's recently elected government has begun a huge, long-overdue project of constitutional reform. As people preparing at last to assume the mantle of citizenship, we should surely be debating, not assuming, whether there is any place for any kind of head of state in our future governance.

SPENCER HAGARD
Cambridge

William's choice

Sir: Jeffery Green (letter, 8 September) says that Prince William is "the only publicly acceptable candidate" to be our next monarch. Is there any evidence at all that the young prince would want to do his father the injury of supplanting him in such a way?

ALICE RIST
London NW4

Europe must lead in Middle East

Sir: Patrick Cockburn ("Come let us reason together", 10 September) provides a compelling reason for the European Union to disassociate itself from the US Middle East policy and to forge its own distinct path.

Oslo was built on "constructive ambiguity", predicated on mutual goodwill and the political danger of stating the end goal. Goodwill was lacking since Labour initiated the most intensive phase of settlement of the West Bank and East Jerusalem since 1967, clearly intended to foreclose the chance of Palestinian sovereignty over an integral territory, thus rendering the process meaningless for Palestinians. Hamas used violence to destroy a bankrupt process, and the US supports Israel for domestic reasons.

The EU must now decide whether to support a process that cannot lead to peace or stability, and which will profoundly damage its own Mediterranean interests, or whether to articulate a fresh approach, the outcome it seeks, and the principles of international law that must necessarily underpin that road and outcome.

Both protagonists require a coherent and viable sovereign state and both require mutual security arrangements, internationally guaranteed. That means a separation of the two communities, not as at present under circumstances of Israel's apartheid system, but territorially separate.

DAVID McDOWALL
Richmond, Surrey

When the people take power

Sir: People power is certainly not mob rule. It is what you get when a sufficient number of people feel that institutions which they thought were there to represent them and articulate their wishes are not responding, and maybe not even listening.

Like Peter Enever (letter, 10 September), I also thought we lived in a parliamentary democracy, but public interest in the role and reform of the monarchy did not spring suddenly on to the public stage for the first time at the beginning of last week; and with the honourable exception of a few MPs, Parliament's interest in the subject has been just about nil in recent years.

LEONARD BOYES
Polegate,
East Sussex

Sir: The difference between mob rule and people power is one million or more bunches of flowers.

MARGARET MACKI
London W8

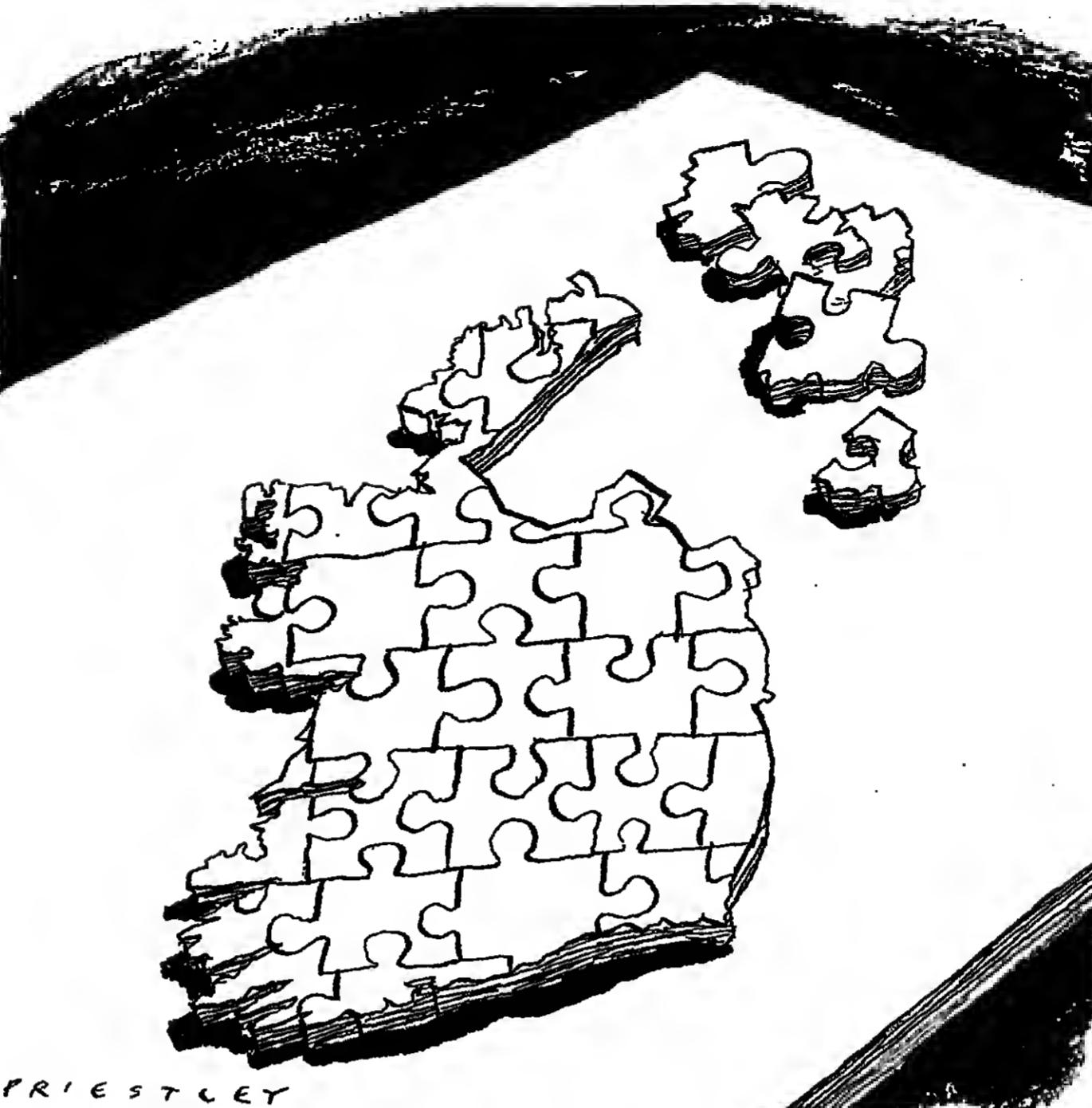
Victorian flag

Sir: I read in the *Dictionary of National Biography* that when King William IV died the servants of his widow, Queen Adelaide, naturally flew the Royal Standard at half mast at Windsor, where she was living. The new Queen, Victoria, paid an immediate dutiful visit to her mourning aunt. The servants, correctly according to protocol, prepared to raise the flag mast-high, since the reigning monarch was present in her own palace. The Queen, out of respect, forbade this and insisted on the flag remaining at half mast throughout her visit.

JOHN LIVINGSTONE
Biarritz, France

analysis

Can the Irish puzzle finally be solved?



PRIESTLEY

The historic multi-party talks in Northern Ireland are set to take place next Monday. David McKittrick looks at what the divided communities of Ulster hope to achieve in these negotiations, and what they still fear

Few in Northern Ireland, after seeing the energy devoted by Tony Blair to making progress on the peace process, doubt that Labour is determined to press ahead with what could be the most important talks for decades.

The talks are to open in Belfast on Monday amid uncertainty and controversy over whether Sinn Féin should be admitted and whether the Ulster Unionists will attend. There will inevitably be much turbulence in the weeks ahead, but almost everyone expects that they will eventually get down to business.

It could all run into the sand, as have so many initiatives over the course of The Troubles, but it could also be the beginning of a whole new era.

If the negotiations develop momentum, much will depend on the personalities and

skills of the politicians and diplomats involved.

But much will also depend on the state of opinion in the two communities, which are separated by such a vast gulf in the way they look at the world. One example of this, seen just this week, was the opinion poll finding that while two-thirds of Catholics think the IRA ceasefire will hold, only one Protestant in 10 agrees with them. And to quote just one other example of the stark difference in attitudes: 87 per cent of Catholics disapprove of plastic bullets, while 86 per cent of Protestants approve of them.

Clearly, compromise is vital if the talks are to succeed or even make substantial progress. An examination of the current state of opinion within the two communities may shed light on how far their political representatives may feel able to go in the negotiations ahead.

Northern nationalists are divided into two distinct parts: the constitutionalists who oppose violence and the republicans who have used it or approved of it. Both see regard the talks as a promising opportunity to advance their objectives.

Practically all constitutional nationalists vote for John Hume's SDLP, which regularly collects well over half the votes cast by Catholics. It thus speaks for the Catholic middle class and much of the working class.

The people it represents basically want peace, a more equal Northern Ireland, a recognition of their Irishness and the opportunity to advance towards a united Ireland – or rather, in Mr Hume's often-repeated phrase, an agreed Ireland.

To generalise: they regard themselves as a community gradually emerging from a history of anti-Catholic discrimination, not yet living in a completely fair society. On one level they regard themselves as having become empowered socially, politically, economically and numerically.

Catholics and nationalists have moved up the social and economic ladder as avenues of employment which were once closed gradually opened to them. Making advances which would have seemed inconceivable a few decades ago, they now for example occupy many key posts in the public sector.

Politically, in John Hume and Gerry Adams they have internationally known leaders. Numerically, they have increased from one-third to at least 43 per cent. Their fortunes have thus been transformed since their pre-1969 days of dolefully impotent isolation.

Yet there are still burs under the saddle. Some businesses and some

Irish nationalists

districts remain closed to them. Some institutions, notably the Royal Ulster Constabulary, continue for whatever reasons to have a predominantly Protestant complexion.

SDLP supporters thus look to talk as an opportunity to consolidate their advances and if possible build upon them. In anything that emerges from talks they will be looking for more moves towards equality and more guarantees of their civil rights; they will also want to ensure that no new obstacles are erected towards Irish unity in the longer term.

A Catholic lawyer summarised: "This place is over 40 per cent Catholic, which means it's over 40 per cent nationalist, which means it's over 40 per cent Irish. I want to see the British acknowledging that, and it would be nice if we could get Unionists acknowledging it too."

The general sense among constitutional nationalists is that they have potentially much to gain from talks, and little enough to fear. Confidence in John Hume is high, while the continuing involvement of Dublin and Washington acts as additional reassurance that their interests will be looked after.

As for the people of the south, they have a similar though not quite identical instinct to that of northern nationalists. People there want to see a fair deal in the north, though most of all they want stability and a final end to the violence. Irish unity remains the longer-term aspiration.

The hardest-line nationalists are of course Sinn Féin and the IRA. With the Sinn Féin vote having increased by leaps and bounds, most recently to 17 per cent, it is plain that Gerry Adams is selling something which more and more nationalist voters wish to buy.

The vital test of his leadership will come, some time in the next few

years, when it is seen whether he brings his supporters towards settling, in the meantime at least, for something less than their cherished goal of a united Ireland. Sinn Féin leaders talk often of a united Ireland but they also from time to time use phrases such as "interim settlement".

Sinn Féin's constituency consists in large part of the urban dispossessed who live in the poorest parts of Belfast, Londonderry and elsewhere and who have largely missed out on the betterment enjoyed by the Catholic middle class and upper working class.

While more Catholics are in work, often in good jobs, ghetto unemployment remains high. Parts of west and north Belfast, for example, have high levels of joblessness, paramilitary involvement and resulting security force attentions, together with general deprivation and alienation.

The peace process began as a nationalist phenomenon, arising from activity within Sinn Féin, the SDLP and Duhlin. But its emphasis on dialogue appears to have crossed the political divide and taken root within Unionism. The potential Paisley influence in all this should not, however, be underestimated. Although more and more voices are to be heard saying it is time to talk and make a new start, there are still many arguing that the ancient enemies – the IRA, Rome and British duplicity – remain as much of a menace as ever.

The debate is still going on. "I just don't believe there could be a pro-union outcome from these negotiations," said one Unionist. "We need to be in there," said another, "because if you're not in you can't win. I just think it's time to go in and face down Adams and Sinn Féin. Paradoxically, it is the former paramilitaries, many of whom have been to jail for loyalist terrorist offences, who privately most favour the idea of dialogue: there is a sense of having learned the hard way that jaw-jaw may be preferable to war-war."

The history of the Unionist political mainstream is littered with examples of leaders who, defying Paisley's wrath, contemplated making a deal with nationalism. Nearly all who did so ended up wrecking their careers, while those who stayed in the trenches have tended to have the longest political lives. This time, however, a perhaps unprecedentedly large section of Unionist opinion seems to favour making a leap of the imagination and opting for talks. This may, in other words, be the moment so many British ministers and Irish nationalists have dreamed of for decades: the moment when Protestant opinion finally propels its representatives into making a deal.

Ulster Unionists

While it is possible to package Irish nationalists reasonably tidily into the two pigeons of Sinn Féin and the SDLP, the picture on the Protestant side is much more fractured and confused. The spread of opinion was vividly illustrated in last year's forum elections in which David Trimble's Ulster Unionists took 46 per cent of the Unionist vote. Forty-three per cent went to the Rev Ian Paisley, and his close associate Robert McCartney, while 10 per cent went to the two loyalist parties which have paramilitary links.

Mr Paisley and Mr McCartney are anti-talks; the loyalists are pro-talks; the Ulster Unionists are taking months to make up their minds. Outside the strictly political sphere, senior business and church elements very much favour negotiation. But grassroots Protestants, according to the opinion polls and anecdotal evidence, seem markedly in favour of dialogue, with more than half of Ulster Unionist supporters seriously urging face-to-face talks between their leaders and Sinn Féin. A much larger majority baulks at face-to-face meetings but still wants participation in talks.

This is new. Unionists have traditionally been suspicious of dialogue and negotiation, even with constitutional nationalists. Finding now that they want their leaders to go eyeball-to-eyeball with Gerry Adams is a complete departure. Many, probably most, Unionist politicians tend, however, to take a different view. They look at the talks lineup, note that Unionists will be up against the SDLP, Sinn Féin and the Dublin government, and conclude that the talks are unlikely to produce a result that would strengthen the union with Britain and the Protestant cause.

But the prevailing sentiments in the Protestant community seem to be that the ceasefires are there to be built on, that if the parties don't talk, London and Dublin will get together and assemble a package anyway, and that the best way to represent Unionist interests is to be at the table. This is a quite startling change of perspective for a community which has lost much political power over recent decades and watched its once-comfortable majority in the country slipping away. Its people have lacked a clear goal to aim for and the chances of forging stronger links with Britain seem remote.

The peace process began as a nationalist phenomenon, arising from activity within Sinn Féin, the SDLP and Duhlin. But its emphasis on dialogue appears to have crossed the political divide and taken root within Unionism. The potential Paisley influence in all this should not, however, be underestimated. Although more and more voices are to be heard saying it is time to talk and make a new start, there are still many arguing that the ancient enemies – the IRA, Rome and British duplicity – remain as much of a menace as ever.

The debate is still going on. "I just don't believe there could be a pro-union outcome from these negotiations," said one Unionist. "We need to be in there," said another, "because if you're not in you can't win. I just think it's time to go in and face down Adams and Sinn Féin. Paradoxically, it is the former paramilitaries, many of whom have been to jail for loyalist terrorist offences, who privately most favour the idea of dialogue: there is a sense of having learned the hard way that jaw-jaw may be preferable to war-war."

The history of the Unionist political mainstream is littered with examples of leaders who, defying Paisley's wrath, contemplated making a deal with nationalism. Nearly all who did so ended up wrecking their careers, while those who stayed in the trenches have tended to have the longest political lives. This time, however, a perhaps unprecedentedly large section of Unionist opinion seems to favour making a leap of the imagination and opting for talks. This may, in other words, be the moment so many British ministers and Irish nationalists have dreamed of for decades: the moment when Protestant opinion finally propels its representatives into making a deal.

Derek's golden silence cut through the waffle

Whoever wrote the obituaries of Derek Taylor, the late publicist for The Beatles, had a difficult job. How can you obituarise a publicist? Say that he did a good job? Got The Beatles very famous? Protected them from each other? Was good on the phone?

What was mentioned nowhere – and why should it be – was that Derek Taylor was responsible for the most electrifying hit of television I have ever seen and I often think of the moment with affection and gratitude. I would be letting down his memory if I didn't record the way it happened, here and now; some details are a bit blurred now, but my memory still retains the correct flavour of the experience.

The occasion was something like the first anniversary of the start of BBC2, and BBC2 had decided to pay tribute to itself by – how else? – staging a long, live discussion programme about TV, the media, the public, the art of communication, etc. This was back in the 1960s, so they probably talked about Marshall McLuhan as well,

and the global village. It was also the era of The Beatles, so although they couldn't lure a Beatle on to the programme, they had managed to get Derek Taylor on. "Yes. We've got Derek Taylor!" you can imagine the assistant producer shouting down the phone in triumph. "Who the hell is Derek Taylor?" you can imagine the producer saying. "Only The Beatles' right-hand man, that's who," says the assistant producer, as if he is being asked who John the Baptist is.

Nowadays I would have to be paid to watch such a programme but in those days I thought that theorising about communication was not a waste of time, so I switched on the two-hour live discussion programme – and by "live" they meant it was actually happening as it went out, whereas today by "live" they mean it was recorded in front of an audience months ago – and settled down to watch the assembled heavyweights hold forth. Thirty years on, I cannot remember any of them by name, but they were playing in the same league as names such as Hoggart and Williams and Miller and Steiner.

competition, as it gave them all more space to talk. But the chairman of the programme finally felt his nerve crack, and he turned to Derek Taylor and said:

"Derek, we have ranged far and wide over the subject of the media today, which is obviously something you are concerned with, but you haven't said anything at all yet in this first hour. Is there anything you want to add to the debate before we go into the second hour?"

To which Taylor finally stirred and made a speech along the following lines:

"Well, I would like to say just one thing. I have been listening to what you have all been saying for the last hour, and I have to say that although I have lived my life in the media, I haven't understood a single word of what you were talking about. I am not stupid but I just don't know what you are driving at. Now, I am sure there are lots of people out there who are listening to this conversation and who are having the same experience as me. They don't know what you're on about. They probably think it's their fault. They probably think they are

old because they can't understand what is being said. So I think that my most valuable role in this discussion is to sit here and be someone they can identify with, someone who is as baffled as they are. What they need on the screen is

someone who they can see with their own two eyes is just as adrift as they are. That's all I want to say, really, and I don't intend to say anything more in the programme."

And although the programme went on for another 60 minutes he didn't say another thing. Not a thing! What a performance! He was worth every penny of whatever he was paid that night. How often since then, when people on TV have been discussing modern painting and rock music and politics and football and the Booker Prize and genetics and all the things that bring out the worst in pseudo-intellectuals, have often have I longed for an icon of Derek Taylor to appear in the corner of the screen, listening and shaking his head, us to say:

"Don't worry. It's not you. It's them. It is they who are talking through their hats."

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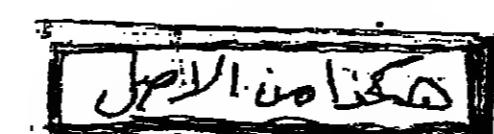
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CAF



Ashdown finds reason to forge a strange alliance



Donald Macintyre

Liberal Democrats are convinced they figure in Blair's obsession with the need for a second and probably a third term

On the face of it, it's hard to imagine anything crazier.

Tony Blair, the most popular, unifying, peace-time Prime Minister of the century carries all before him. Today's endorsement of the Scottish Parliament vindicates not only his party's devolution policy but his own, rather lonely, and, in Scotland, originally much criticised decision to hold a referendum in the first place. His intuitive grasp of the public mood after the Princess of Wales's death, and his ability to speak for the country, underline his invincibility. His majority is huge and impregnable. His party shows scarcely a sign of schism. And up pops Paddy Ashdown talking about the desirability of coalition. Who does he think he is?

A politician still confident he is very much in play, is who. His interview this week with the *New Statesman* was at once more casual and calculated than it looks. More casual, in that he did not mean to drop some heavy hint that he is immediately to be offered, much less accept, a fistful of places in a Blair Cabinet. More calculated in that he is determined to drive home to his own party, as it prepares for its annual conference in 10 days' time, the merits of its deepening relationship with Labour – a relationship which will enter a new phase next Wednesday when senior Liberal Democrats meet ministers for the first time round the cabinet table under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister.

There were grumbles among some of Ashdown's MPs at Westminster when he broke it to them that he was accepting places on the new cabinet committee on constitutional reform. But he is entitled to boast that his strategy – all the way from his pre-election promise that he would not prop up a minority Tory government – has so far succeeded better than even he could have hoped. The arm's-length alignment with Labour paid off handsomely as voters, backing candidates from each party with cheering anti-Tory pronouncements, delivered Ashdown 46 seats. Because of Labour's landslide, even with this signal electoral success, the party doesn't have the leverage it would have liked. But that is precisely why it's sensible to exploit whatever opportunities it has, including seats on the new committee, to press the Government into backing the one change that would qualitatively transform its chances: electoral reform for the House of Commons. It is not even as if the party has forgotten how to oppose; with an eye to the student vote, the Liberal Democrats will campaign this autumn against the Government's introduction of student fees. For all these reasons, despite the buffing and puffing, Ashdown will have little serious trouble at his conference.

For Blair himself, it's different. He can't see, from his Olympia perch, anything on the horizon which threatens the kind of parliamentary instability that would make the Liberal Democrats useful, let alone necessary. But Ashdown's calculation is that Blair is looking well beyond the horizon. When the Prime Minister famously spent some of the summer before the election reading George Dangerfield's *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, he cannot have known how relevant the landslide of 1 May 1997 would make it. The story of the collapse of the centre-left

which so dominated the 1996 parliament is imprinted on his brain. The Liberal Democrats best placed to read Blair are convinced that he is obsessed by the need for a second, and probably a third term. And they are probably right that they themselves figure, however cloudily, in that obsession.

Nevertheless, there is an odd mischievousness in Ashdown's intriguing disclosure that he would have recommended to his party a coalition had there been a hung parliament. At what price? He is surely not assuming that Blair would have given away proportional representation in an indecently hasty backroom deal to prop him up. It would have been just as plausible, and a good deal more dignified, for a Blair minority government to soldier on and win a second election outright. But without it, would Ashdown's party have backed coalition? Probably not.

For electoral reform remains the Liberal Democrats' own obsession. And for all Ashdown's bullish expressed conviction that Blair will come round to PR quite soon, the Liberal Democrats are still unsure of Blair's true intentions, or even whether Blair himself is yet sure of them. Yes, he wants to forge the sort of grand alliance that will withstand the pressures which did for the left and centre-left after the First World War. But how? Does he calculate that, denied electoral reform, the most serious Liberal Democrats will

have nowhere to go but to a Labour Party they can at last feel entirely comfortable in, or is he a pluralist in the purest sense of the word? New Labour big tent, or multi-party coalition? Even the most optimistic private characterisation of the Prime Minister's views is that he is "emotionally more open to being intellectually persuaded" of the case for reform.

The deliberations of the cabinet committee on the terms of reference for the Commission which will put a reformed system to the promised referendum may shed some light on its views, and on whether it is flirting with the halfway house of the alternative vote system. The pressures are building up in favour of change, the latest being increasing talk in Scotland that local authorities might change to PR to clear up town-hall politics – a reform that is fully in the competence of the new Edinburgh parliament. If that happened, England might well follow. And a first-past-the-post system for Westminster would look all the more anomalous.

But whatever the answer is, Ashdown's strategy can scarcely be abandoned. In hindsight it seems clear that the Liberal Democrats could ever, post-Blair, have contemplated continuing to sink in an equidistant tent. They will oppose the Conservatives, they can only compete with Labour. The two leaders are friends. The big picture policies, on social cohesion, on economics, even on all constitutional reform short of PR, could hardly be closer.

Only tribalism, in either party, now stands in the way of the kind of co-operation Ashdown envisages. No one yet knows quite what the endgame is. But there is a book which both Ashdown and Blair seem to see written sometime in the next century. Forgive the title – it's awful: *The Strange Continuity of Liberal and Centre-Left Britain*.

Adrian Dannatt visits a timely exhibition that traces the history of celebrity snapping



The paparazzi make their presence felt in *'La Dolce Vita'*

"Elliptical" as in the grotesque, absurd and bizarre, might be picked at random as an adjective for the scene this week at Manhattan's prestigious Robert Miller gallery, whose latest exhibition vanished altogether on its opening night beneath a pan-global avalanche of photographers, TV cameras and journalists simultaneously reporting on each other. Synchronicity ordained that this show, planned eight months in advance as part of the gallery programme, would suddenly be turned into a hulmic media feeding frenzy: for its title is "Il Paparazzo", and the black-and-white images on the walls trace this distinct photographic genre from the mid-1950s until today.

Fellini (not just his "esque") is much to the fore. Not only is the director pictured several times, but the exhibition is a homage to the term he invented for *La Dolce Vita*, for which he created the name "Paparazzo" after a school friend – an entirely fictional origin for a breed fixed on raw reality.

The Robert Miller gallery is renowned for its photography department, which specialises in such modern masters as Diane Arbus, William Eggleston and the abstractions of Jan Groover. These are overtly high art practitioners, far removed from the sordid financial engines that drive the paparazzi. To curate a show around the micro-history of the celebrity snapper would be an interesting choice for such a gallery in any circumstances, as within the polished, white gallery cube any image gains associative pedigree. But as this show demonstrates, there is no such thing as "photography" per se, merely dif-

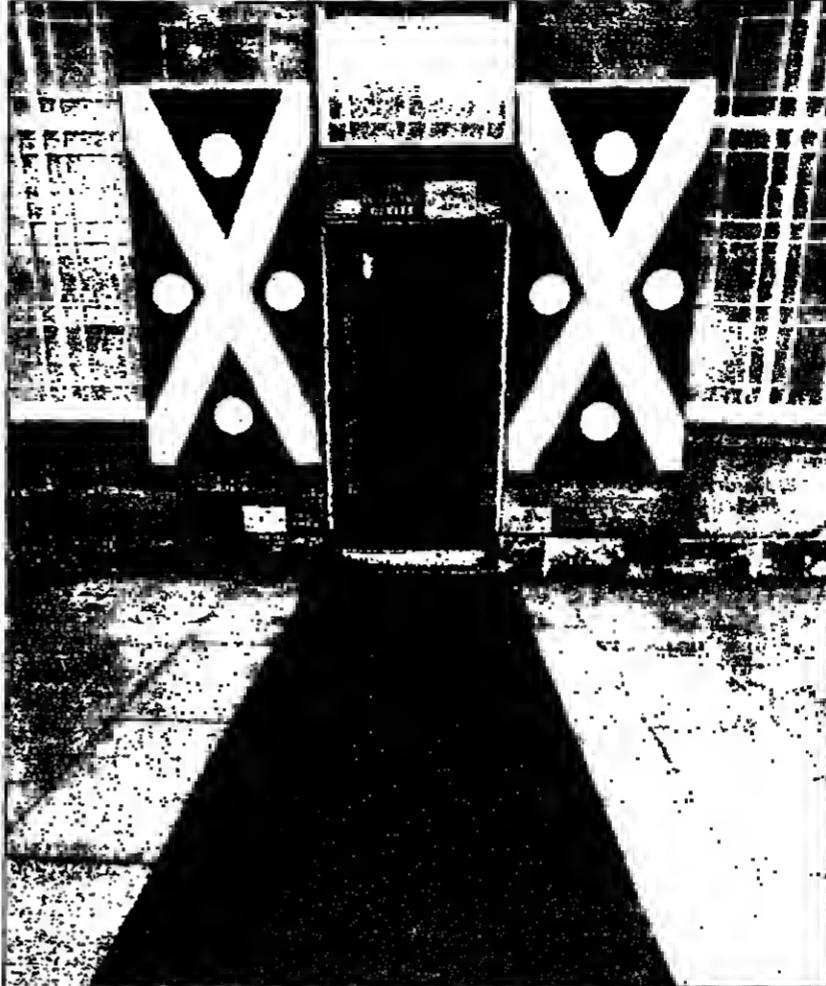
ferent uses and abuses of photographs. If the idea was to explore the hidden aesthetics of such photography by presenting it in a different cultural arena, which the show ably and fascinatingly does, the surging mélée of reporters at the opening were more concerned for a titillatory pan of glamorous guests or shocking close-ups, replicating unthinkingly the issues of the show. At one point, the smallest room contained no fewer than six rival TV crews, tripods scattered like alien visitors, glaring lights creating a miniature set at a German pre-sets while a German

presser launched into his monologue, waggishly whipping out his own Instamatic to flash into his own camera, part of the vertiginous self-contained media storm that included photographers photographing photographers in front of their photographs of photographers photographing photographers and so on into post-modern meltdown. Olivier Renou-Clement, the gallery's photography director, attempted to explain his intention to a ceaseless chain of interviewers from Taiwan to Denmark, all determined to reduce it to a moral *fusca pes*.

The show certainly does not whitewash the paparazzi by turning their work into isolated visual vignettes of compositional merit; instead, and rather surprisingly, the first historical section, "Il Paparazzo 1954-1964", is extremely condemnatory. While

Scotland's gamble on a new political culture

by Andrew Marr



The Old Royal High School in Edinburgh, possible home of the new parliament

In local politics there are dim, expenses-fiddling fourth-raters under whose authority no sentient creature would like to exist

Paradoxically, the lack of a confident Scottish domestic agenda, argued vigorously between the parties, has also fuelled the suspicion among the enemies of home rule that there is a hidden agenda. Is the fuzziness deliberate? Who and what is hiding behind the blandly reassuring generalities about devolved power and responsive government?

In Scotland, there are many better-off people, and businesses, who genuinely fear that the result of the referendum will be a belated, if less extreme, experiment in the policies advocated by Maxton in the Twenties; that, just as Marxist China embraces privatisation, this small northern country will have a go at socialism. It will be the insurance companies, as well as the landlords, who are driven out, and the immediate tax impost will be less dramatic, but the damage will be real enough.

This may seem a bizarre fear, given the general conservatism of New Labour in power. But

the opponents of devolution (including, it has to be said, certain members of the Tribe of Marr – we are not a clan – who live north of the Border) are looking not at Tony Blair who they shiver. They are worried, rather, by the prospect of councillors from a string of poorly run and occasionally corrupt local authorities near at hand, taking control of Scotland, and mucking the place up further.

At its extreme, this becomes both an anti-Scottish and an anti-politics argument. Scottish politics has been a branch factory of British politics, and to many people the country had seemed to contract out its political life to London. It was something that happened far away. So, many people ask, why have the political foot nod knees back? Why not let us get on with our lives?

The second line of thinking is openly pessimistic about Scottish public life. Among many Conservative critics, in particular, there is a half-spoken belief that Scotland does

not contain enough talented and dedicated people to fill an Edinburgh parliament. Ex-ministers, among others, believe that it will inevitably become the preserve of those who could not make a living elsewhere and who are so tasteless that they can't even join the (not overbrilliant) squad of Scottish MPs at Westminster.

Is this possible? Frankly, in theory at least, yes. The worst people in Scottish local politics are awful. There are dim, expenses-fiddling fourth-raters under whose authority no sentient creature would like to exist. There are also fine and dedicated people. But unless the Scottish parliament lures many more good people into public life there, it will fail.

On this morning of all mornings, that is an expression of faith – a gamble. It may seem ludicrously optimistic. But if it is a gamble, it is a gamble on democracy. To reject this new parliament is to reject politics. And none of us can afford to do that.

Dear Arthritis People...



Dear Arthritis People,
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YOUNG OR OLD - THE PAIN'S THE SAME

business & city

**FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR**

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

BTR opts for £2.8bn disposal programme

Magnus Grimond

BTR yesterday moved decisively to turn its back on its conglomerate past after announcing plans for a massive disposal programme involving nearly one-third of its £9.5bn annual sales to leave the business focused entirely on its engineering activities.

The move, which will be accompanied by a "substantial" repayment of capital to shareholders, marks the final unravelling of the sprawling group covering around 1,000 businesses put together by Sir Owen Green, who, like Lord Hanson, created one of the most dynamic and acquisitive conglomerates of the 1980s.

But BTR appeared to run out of steam in the early 1990s and the latest sell-off is the second phase of a revitalisation programme initiated by Ian Strachan, chief executive, who was brought in in January 1996 with a brief to turn the group around. He has already disposed of businesses with around £2bn of sales since unveiling a £622m restructuring a year ago and last month announced that Robert Baumau, the chairman of British Aerospace, would take over BTR's chairmanship from next May.

Why 'focus' has become the business mantra of the age

Roger Trapp

BTR's decision to sell off £2.8bn worth of non-engineering businesses is the latest manifestation of a trend that has been continuing for some time. Diversification is out and focus is in.

Though we have recently seen the arch-conglomerate Hanson split itself into four, ICI spin off its pharmaceuticals interests into Zeneca and Williams concentrate on fire and security products, it is tempting to see this as another turn of the management fad cycle. After all, we have seen focus, or "stick to the knitting", as it was once known, pushed before, only for companies to opt for diversification once more in the interests of balancing their exposure to sectors or countries.

This time, though, say the break-up proponents, it is different. This is partly a response to changes, in Britain at least, to the accounting regimen. The Accounting Standards Board under Sir David Tweedie has pretty much outlawed the "kitchen sink" provisions and extraordinary items that acquisitions companies used to

expected mostly to have been sold by the end of next year.

Some observers believe the new chief executive has bowed to pressure from the City to take more radical action to deal with BTR's problems than was unveiled last year. But he said yesterday: "In the 12 months since we announced it, we have made considerable progress and this is the logical extension of it."

He also played down any suggestion of friction with BTR's investors. "There is a continuing dialogue with the shareholders and, on the basis of the fact that they are the owners of the business, we listen to what they say. But they generally remain supportive of the strategy of focusing for growth."

One shareholder injected a note of caution yesterday, saying the sale of so many businesses would be "a huge task". He added: "We don't want a fire sale after all these years. This is always a temptation when management just decides to get rid of businesses."

One analyst suggested Mr Strachan had bowed too far to City opinion. "It smacks a bit of policy on the hoof," he said. "It smacks a bit of giving the City what it wants and the City loves action."

However, other analysts were more sanguine, suggesting that the planned moves could not lead to a re-rating of BTR's shares. Geoff Allum at Henderson Crosthwaite said: "I have always felt what Strachan was trying to do was the right thing. The only question was how long it would take him to get on and do it. He has accelerated that pace dramatically today."

Assuming proceeds from disposals come somewhere in the range £3.5bn and £4bn, he forecast that the shares could now go to between 280p and 320p.

The restructuring announcement accompanied interim figures showing pre-tax profits of £540m for the six months to June, up from £44m in the comparable period, which was hit by the provisions for the original restructuring programme.

Despite being earlier forewarned by a profit warning, analysts were disappointed with the results. The strength of sterling cost £54m in translation and trading effects, but even stripping out exchange effects and exceptional items, profits slipped 5.7 per cent to £534m. The interim dividend is held at 4p, but the group forecast a better performance in the second half.

Comment, page 21



Ian Strachan: Observers believe he has bowed to pressure from the City. Photograph: FT

Gas price cuts will leave 3m customers in the cold

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Some 3 million low income households are to be excluded from price cuts by British Gas next year, which will knock £28 off average bills for its remaining 16 million customers.

Centrica, the demerged British Gas supply business, has limited the £28 cut to the 6 million homes that pay bills by direct debit and a further 10 million that settle bills within 10 days. The 3 million low income homes left out of the reductions, of which 1 million have pre-payment meters, will instead receive a only a price freeze when the cuts start on 12 January.

The move means those excluded will get almost no benefit from the reduction in pipeline charges in the new price formula for Transco, part of the former British Gas, or from the abolition of the gas levy announced in the Budget. The levy, which disappears in April, was a special tax on old North Sea gas contracts.

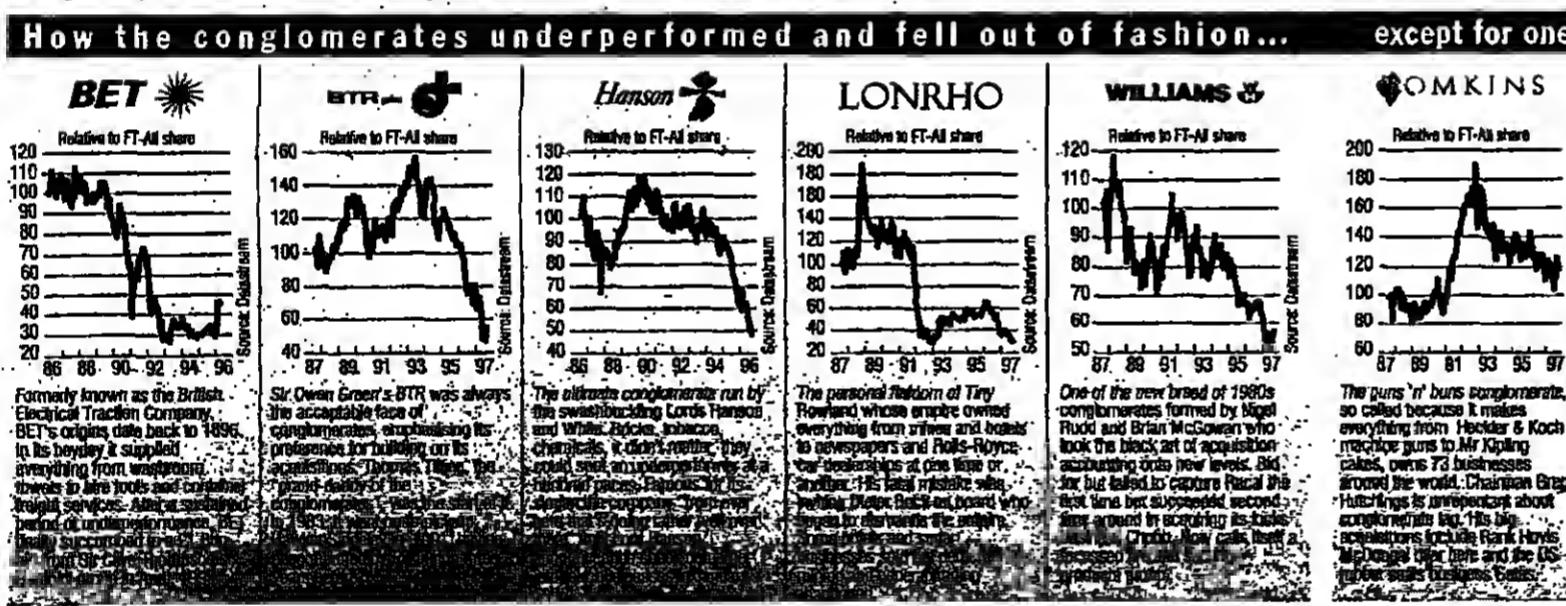
Roy Gardner, Centrica's chief executive, defended the cuts, arguing pre-payment households were already subsidised. Although Centrica has a legal duty to pass on the cuts, it can decide how it implements the reductions. "We currently charge pre-payment customers less than they cost us. It's an industry-wide problem," responded Mr Gardner.

The Gas Consumers' Council called for an urgent investigation by Ofgas, the industry watchdog and the Government. "We believe this represents a significant worsening of their position," said Sue Sipman, GCC director.

Last night Eastern Natural Gas, one of the largest independent suppliers, said the reductions had been implemented unfairly by Centrica. Jim Whelan, Eastern's managing director, said: "I would have thought it would have applied to all customers. These cuts are not the result of competitive pressure."

About £14 of the £28 saving came from the reduction in pipeline charges, following Transco's defeat at the hands of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Centrica yesterday unveiled losses of £21m for the first six months of the year, up from losses of £53m during the same period in 1996. The figures included a £192m charge to cover the windfall utility tax and a £75m reduction in earnings due to the warm spring weather.



Wood new chief of Sheffield Wednesday

Andrew Yates

Sheffield Wednesday, the Premier League football club, has moved closer to a flotation on the stock market by appointing Ian Wood, the former head of First Leisure's sports division, as its new chief executive.

Mr Wood took up his duties at the start of the week. The club has not revealed what he will be paid but he is thought to be in line for bonuses and share options if he can float the club.

Sheffield Wednesday yesterday sent its shareholders details of its financial results for the year to 31 May. The club made a loss of £3.2m after splashing out more than £4.3m on transfers, including last season's £3.5m purchase of Benito Carbone, the Italian football star. The club returned to the black at the operating level, making a profit of £1.84m compared to a loss of £716,000 last year.

Charterhouse Development Capital, the venture capitalists, became the largest shareholder in Sheffield Wednesday last May, paying £1.5m for a 36 per cent stake in the club. The club has used the cash to buy new players such as Paolo Di Canio, another Italian import, from Celtic. Manager David Pleat has been told he has more money to spend on players.

Geoff Arthubton, of Charterhouse Development, said: "This new appointment brings us closer to a flotation."

Mr Wood headed First Leisure's bowling and health and fitness business. His exit is one of a growing number of management changes at the leisure group in the wake of the appointment of Michael Grade, the former head of Channel 4, as chairman. Chief executive John Conlon and Nick Tamblin, who was in charge of the Chancellor's planned remarks more

relevant, according to Treasury officials.

Mr Brown, with other EU finance ministers, will meet many of their Asian counterparts in Bangkok in advance of the G7 and IMF sessions. Of-

Asian crisis 'need not hinder growth'

Manila - A new World Bank report claimed yesterday that the East Asian financial crisis would not hamper the region's record of strong growth as long as structural economic reforms were made, writes Stephen Vines.

Taking issue with some Asian leaders, primarily Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, Stijn Claessens, the report's main author, said he did not think that international speculators and hedge fund managers were responsible for

the turbulence in Asian currencies and stock markets.

"On the contrary," he said, "in some cases they have supported these currencies." He argued that the general pessimism about Asian markets was more than the fundamentals warranted, and said some fund managers were coming back.

Even so, the report gives plenty of grounds for pessimism. At the heart of the region's problems, it says, lies a mass of bad debt and low-grade lending by banks.

and stock markets yesterday. Toky's Nikkei index lost 423 points to end at 18,282. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index also dived, shedding 497 points to 14,308.

In London the FTSE 100 index ended 50 points lower at 4,854. By mid-morning the Dow Jones index was down 34 points to 7,625, while the dollar jumped to \$1.28.

Yesterday's figures showed that Japan's GDP declined by 2.9 per cent in the second quarter of the year, the biggest fall since a 3.4 per cent drop early in 1974.

Consumer spending dived by 5.7 per cent, and private investment fell by 1.5 per cent. Exports are the only expanding area of the economy.

Koji Omi, the economic planning minister, said the fall in GDP was temporary, reflecting an increase in sales tax in April. "The gradual recovery trend led by domestic demand remains intact," he said.

Comment, page 21

INTEREST RATES

CURRENCIES

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

OTHER INDICATORS

British Energy to buy nuclear stations in US

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Energy yesterday unveiled its biggest expansion since privatisation last year, with a venture to buy and operate several nuclear power stations in the US.

The nuclear group has formed a joint venture business to acquire the stations, called AmerGen, with its US partner, the Philadelphia utility group Peco Energy. Robin Jeffrey, British Energy's deputy chairman, said in Washington last night that the new company was already in discussions with several other power businesses to buy nuclear stations.

"We're looking at a number of plants and are talking to the owners. This is not to acquire a single plant. Peco on their own could do that. It's bigger than that. We're not going to buy one plant and pull up stumps," said Mr Jeffrey.

Mr Jeffrey said AmerGen was not planning to buy Peco's existing nuclear stations, but was examining some of the other 106 nuclear generating plants across the US, Peco, which began exploring investment opportunities with British Energy last October, wholly owns a nuclear station at Limerick in Pennsylvania and has 42.5 per cent stakes in two more, at Peach Bottom in the same state and Salem in New Jersey.

Magnox's total liabilities dropped from £8.9bn to £8.4bn,

while the value of its investments rose by £500m to £3.44bn. The remaining assets, in the form of a guarantee from the government to cover some liabilities, was uprated by 4.5 per cent from £3.7bn to £4bn. Mark Baker, chairman, said that in two years the deficit would be wiped out.

STOCK MARKETS						
FTSE 100						Nikkei
4905.20	-45.30	-0.9	5086.80	4056.60	3.38	17700
4884.70	-12.30	-0.3	4729.40	4366.20	3.55	17500
4864.20	-18.80	-0.8	2438.00	2017.90	3.39	17300
4843.70	-23.68	-0.7	2374.20	2178.29	3.17	17100
4823.17	+1.52	+0.1	2376.39	1989.78	3.38	17000
4803.00	-17.10	-0.7	2376.39	1989.78	3.38	16900
4782.44	-59.47	-0.6	8229.31	5032.94	1.57	16800
4762.77	+8.80	+0.0	20681.07	17303.85	0.84	16700
4742.00	-191.22	-1.3	18673.27	12055.17	2.96	16600
4722.44	-140.54	-1.1	4438.93	2848.77	1.36	16500
4702.14	-44.25	-1.1	275.75	275.75	-	16400

Statistics as of 11 September

INTEREST RATES						
Short sterling*						UK medium gilt
7.06	7.50	6.95	7.88	6.91	8.01	10.75
6.59	6.00	5.35	6.93	6.05	7.12	9.25
6.50	5.50	5.08	7.23	-	-	8.75
3.03	3.55	5.65	6.33	6.31	-	7.50
Money Market Rates						
Bond Yields *						
UK	7.06	7.50	6.95	7.88	6.91	8.01
US	6.59	6.00	5.35	6.93	6.05	7.12
Japan	0.50	0.50	0.58	2.23	-	-
Germany	3.03	3.55	5.65	6.33	6.31	-
Interest rates						
UK	7.06	7.50	6.95	7.88	6.91	8.01
US	6.59	6.00	5.35	6.93	6.05	7.12
Japan	0.50	0.50	0.58	2.23	-	-</

business

United Biscuits narrows its focus

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

United Biscuits has become so used to making headlines for the wrong reasons that it was proud to boast a set of results that were "deliberately boring" yesterday. The company and its chief executive, Eric Nicoll, have certainly been through the mill in the past few years - the McVities and KP crisp group has been relentlessly pursued by powerful competitors such as PepsiCo, the makers of Walkers Crisps.

The effect on UB has been a share price that has underperformed the market by 60 per cent over the past five years. Yesterday's 5.5p fall took the stock to a five-year low of 198p.

To its credit, the company has taken tough decisions. It pulled out of the United States when the Keebler operation was sold two years ago. Since then it has also sold nine other businesses, mainly in continental European snacks, and rationalised its manufacturing base through eight factory closures. Other disposals are expected in low-margin areas such as UK snacks and continental businesses, though there are no immediate plans and buyers may prove thin on the ground.

The strategy going forward is to concentrate fire-power on fewer key brands, such as Hoola Hoops, Skips and Penguin, while driving forward more recent launches such as the McVities Go Ahead range of low-fat snacks.

The portfolio has certainly been strengthened. Two years ago, 40 per cent of UB's sales delivered a return on capital employed of 5 per cent or under. But after disposing of businesses with £1bn of sales just 5 per cent of turnover is now in that category. By contrast, more than three-quarters of the group's business returns more than 20 per cent on capital employed.

While it is difficult to fault the strategy, the criticism is that it is taking a long time to feed through to results. Profits before exceptions in the six months to 12 July were flat at £45m and the company is struggling to drive growth. Sales fell by 3 per cent at constant currency rates and the company admits there is unlikely to be any top line growth in the second half. All this means UB is relying on efficiency improvements to improve the bottom line. So while the City had been hoping that UB was moving into the recovery phase, the best it can look forward to is another year of consolidation.

The geographic picture is also still very mixed. UK snacks and biscuits profits were flat, but crisps sales fell, with own-label business particularly weak. In Asia Pacific, profits were wiped out by a price war in Australia, where PepsiCo's Frito Lay is attacking UB's dominant share in the grocery sector.

Problems take shine off Rio Tinto

Rio Tinto, the mining group which used to be called RTZ, has suffered some unaccustomed hiccoughs over the past year or so. The Sumitomo scandal, which saw copper prices slump last year, was out of the group's making, but a range of other problems closer to home have taken the shine off the group's normally slick image. Coinciding with the integration of CRA, the Australian associate with which it merged last year, the shares have underperformed the market by 16 per cent since the beginning of 1996, dropping 29p to 996p yesterday.

The cause was probably disappointment over the interim dividend, which had effectively been cut as a result of Rio's decision to declare its re-

sults in dollars. So although the group announced a flat payout of 16.5 cents yesterday, the gain in the value of the pound since last year means that the sterling equivalent of the payment has been cut 2.2 per cent to 10.37p.

Rio is also trying to rebuild cover, which was 1.5 times in dollar terms last year. Exchange and cover will reverse in time. More important is the outlook for earnings, which, rising 9 per cent to \$975m (£599m) at the pre-tax level, were broadly in line with expectations in the six months to June.

There are grounds for hope there. Rio appears to be getting to grips with the high costs in Comalco, the Australian aluminium operation. It is also taking a hard line over its coal operations in New South Wales. In total, cost savings following the CRA merger should be running at their full rate of \$250m by next year.

Trickier to call is the Kennecott smelter at the Bingham Canyon mine in Utah. Lost profits could be as much as \$100m this year, after \$150m in 1996.

The effects of Rio's rising output were clear from the interim figures, with higher gold and copper production at Kennecott and capacity increases at the Escondida mine in Chile feeding into a £144m earnings uplift from sales volumes. That momentum should be maintained into the second half, with higher copper prices to boot. The real clouds come from the Far East, in the extent of Chinese buying of copper and how much demand lost if growth falters in the tiger economies. Full-year earnings of \$1.4bn would put the shares on a forward p/c of 16. Hold.

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Coats in need of major surgery

Coats Viyella, the troubled textiles group, has fallen apart at the seams over the past few years. Terrible first-half results yesterday saw its shares tumble another 13p to 105p, having fallen from 164p a year ago and 283p in 1994.

In the past five years the shares have underperformed the stock market by more than 70 per cent.

Pre-tax profits fell 12 per cent to £41.5m in the six months to June. The figures reveal a catalogue of woes. The spring collection at Jaeger, the normally reliable fashion label, flopped. A downturn in the Russian fashion market whacked margins on sales of Gnehaus clothes and Coats' contract clothing business, which supplies M&S, was disrupted by a continuing restructuring program. To cap it all, the strong pound wiped £6m off operating profits.

There is no easy solution to Coats' many problems. The second half is likely to see some sort of improvement, but not much of one.

Mike Ost, the new chief executive, faces an uphill struggle to pull the group out of the mire. In his short tenure he has already accelerated Coats' belated restructuring programme, which will cost the group up to £30m a year, compared to an original budget of £10m. But the group is in need of more fundamental surgery.

Mr Ost is to announce his future strategy by the end of the year. He will have to reveal a raft of disposals or a break-up of the group via a demerger to restore any sort of investor confidence.

House broker BZW has slashed its current year profits forecast from £140m to £92m to reflect the rise in restructuring charges and the poor prospects for the second half. That puts the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 13. Coats should also maintain its dividend at 8.8p, to give a forward yield of more than 10 per cent. Even so the shares look high enough.

Limelight disaster continues with new profits warning

Nigel Cope

City Correspondent

at a fraction of the issue price. In that case there were threats of litigation from institutions though it never materialised.

It is possible that there could be a Stock Exchange investigation into the performance of Limelight shares, though the exchange refused to comment yesterday. "It is a disaster," said one institutional investor. "It may be one for the regulators."

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The Single European Currency is planned to start on January 1st 1999. We'll make sure you don't get left behind.

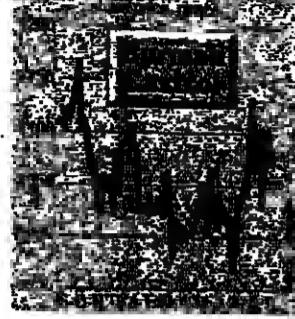
Deciding whether the UK will join the European Single Currency or not is a tricky business. Whatever happens, there are implications for British businesses, particularly those that trade with the rest of Europe. With our proven track record in international markets, Barclays will make sure you're poised to take advantage. That's why we're running a series of conferences to help explain how the currency change could affect your business. In addition, we're developing products and services to make sure you're in the fast lane when the euro is introduced. Catch up on the current debate by reading our free euro bulletins, just telephone 0800 535 354 to get on our mailing list.

market report / shares

Data Bank

FITSE 100	4854.8	50.4
FITSE 250	4633.2	31.5
FITSE 350	2345.2	22.8
SEAC Volume	7,120 Shares	37,477 Dollars
Globe Index	97.41	0.0107

Share spotlight



Overnight fall in New York sends Footsie into retreat

Taking Stock

Shares gave ground for the fourth day running with Footsie falling below 4,900 points. The blue-chip index lost a further 50.4; it has fallen almost 140 this week.

Selling has been relatively light. With buyers seemingly content to sit on the sidelines the stock market is beginning to look exceedingly tired although many observers believe shares will recover their buoyancy. This week's ragged retreat follows a strong performance last week when Footsie achieved a 176.7 advance.

New York's overnight fall and poor opening did much of yesterday's damage. Further weakness in the Far East was another telling influence.

Another heavy round of company results was generally well received with BTX, the latest to turn its back on the conglomerate image, leading blue chips with a 1.5p (after 22.5p) gain to 234p. The latest buzz

phrase returning shareholder value, featured high in its presentation.

The company promised to return cash raised in its bid to become a focused engineering group to shareholders, presumably through a buy-back or special dividend. It was enough to even drag the bombed-out warrants higher.

The batch which can be switched into BTX shares this year at 258p more than doubled to 2.75p and next year's warrants with an exercise price of 405p, jumped 0.75p to 2.75p.

EMI was another to buck the trend. Like BTX, its shares were recently bumping along at a 12-month low.

The showbiz group's performance, up 0.5p to 583.5p, is an indirect result of the planned Grand Metropolitan-Guinness merger.

The market is convinced that if the mammoth deal goes through, it will put intense

pressure on Allied Domecq and Seagram, the Canadian drinks giant, to take defensive action, possibly by merging their spirit operations.

Such a get-together could lead to a separately quoted company with Allied and Seagram raising cash by selling some of their interest.

Allied would probably pour the money into its retail operations and Seagram, which has caught the showbiz bug, could decide to descend on EMI, a disappointing share since last year's demerger from the Thorn retail group.

To pile on the agony for former Thorn EMI shareholders the Thorn side has turned in

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

an even weaker display, falling from 402.5p to 160p.

National Westminster Bank added 10p to 834p on the story it would sell its securities arm to Commerzbank and P&O continued to score from Bovis flotation plans, up 6.5p to 443.5p, and Biocompatibles International managed a token

up 25p to 575p.

Gibson, the printing ink group, held at 199.5p although sales and profits are running "well ahead" of last year.

Kwik Save, the discount chain, firm at 331p; the shares were 843p in 1994.

PDFM, the ubiquitous fund manager, has nudged its stake to 22 per cent.

Royal Energy dipped 7.5p to 1,155p on the surprise intervention of the Ukrainian state oil company in its agreed bid for JKX Oil & Gas. The

Ukrainians now have 11.67 per cent of JKX, acquired through stockbroker T Hoare & Co, and Ramco and JKX are anxious to discover their intentions. It is thought the Ukrainians have moved to prevent Ramco getting full control and may be prepared to buy more shares; JKX held at 52p.

International Greetings, a giftware and greeting card group, remained at 357.5p after Anders Hedlund, joint chief executive, sold 124,670 shares; his family interest is now 72.47 per cent. Johnston Press director Edward Wood sold 215,000 shares and has 0.2 per cent. The shares shaded 2.5p to 222.5p.

Share buy-backs were evident. Rank picked up 6 million at 350p; Tomkins 1 million at 317.5p; and Perkins Foods 135,000 at 95p.

Zinc prospects lifted Enex International 1.5p to 34.75p. A peak; the shares were floated at 220p in February.

Peterhouse, the old Shorco, returned to market with a flourish. Suspended at 73.5p in July and then placed at 80p, the shares closed at 100p. Shorco, providing steel security cabins, merged with unquoted Tatty Construction and Lowfields Technology, an environment monitoring business, to create Peterhouse.

Petrel Resources, the latest John Deere vehicle, is paying £1.3m in cash and shares for two African interests of privately owned Heritage Oil & Gas. The deal gives Heritage, which has extensive African interests, a 22.5 per cent stake in Petrel. It is likely that other Heritage interests will be pumped into Petrel, up 0.5p to 13.5p on Olex.

Recruitment group PSD climbed 20.5p to 320.5p, a peak; the shares were floated at 220p in February.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (PE) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: r Ex rights; E Dividend; a Ex all United Securities Market & Suspended by Party Paid m Nil Paid Shares; + AM Stock. Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Supply dat 0891 123 335, and when prompted to do so, enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dat 0891 123 335 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

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UK Stock Market Report 01 Subject Report 02 Water Shares 39
UK Company News 02 Stock Report 20 Electricity Shares 40
Foreign News 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Banks 41
Norwich Union 04 Shell Report 12.50 BP 40
Rank Group 10.00 Glaxo Wellcome 70.000 BP 40
Unilever 10.00 BP 40

Anybody with a long-dial telephone can use the service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio listing, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpline 071 923 4378 (9am - 5pm).

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
BP	6200.00	-	200000	Barclay Int'l	1000.00	+10	200000	Barclay	1000.00	+10	200000
Glaxo	20.00	-	200000	Tioxide	900.00	+10	200000	ASDA Group	600.00	+10	200000
Shell	12.50	-	200000	Standard Char'l	540.00	+10	200000	National Grid	400.00	+10	200000
BP	10.00	-	100000	Shell Transport	6200.00	+10	200000	NatWest Bank	400.00	+10	200000
BP	10.00	-	100000	BP	550.00	+10	200000	Woolworth	400.00	+10	200000

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour

Open 4376.3 down 265 11.00 4353 down 415 14.00 4353 down 415
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ST LEGER MEETING: Double Trigger's rider blames a roving camera as an emerging four-year-old joins the stayers' hierarchy Old guard stand aside for Canon Can

RICHARD EDMONDSON
reports from Doncaster

It was billed as the two-horse race, but the Doocaster Cup may yesterday have provided the two-horse watershed. Double Trigger and Further Flight, who have entertained us for so many years, were on match for the younger pairing of Canon Can and Persian Punch, whose four minutes it took to run the Group Three contest they suddenly looked very old. It may be time to prepare the tributes.

There were quiet huddles around the beaten veterans in the winners' enclosure. Michael Roberts, Double Trigger's jockey, complained that his horse had been distracted by television's roving camera and has lodged an official complaint.

DONCASTER
2.05: MUSALAS has not run since disappointing in the Derby, but was earlier third to Benny The Dip in the Dante Stakes over this trip. Faithful Son looks clearly best of the rest.

2.25: BUSY FLIGHT can win for a second successive year. He set off too fast when unplaced at Royal Ascot, but returned to form last week, Memorable, stepping up from Warre Place, and there can be no greater compliment than that in this race. His testicles were still intact.

Barry Hills said Further Flight would have appreciated more give in the ground. Both camps seemed to accept, however, that the biggest influence in defeat was *anno Domini*.

Further Flight is now a ghostly figure with a milky coat, and if you lost him in a snowdrift you

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Musalsal
(Doncaster 2.05)
NB: Diggers Drawn
(Doncaster 3.05)

could never get him back. The years have taken the richness out of Double Trigger's chestnut hide but he did look good terms with himself. But then his form was superior and, uniquely in this race, his testicles were still intact.

It was the traditional Cup-race



HYPERION'S
SPLIT TIPS

to beat the useful Mjana in a two-horse event at Newmarket. The flyby DUTY SOUTHE, trounced in the Sandown race, was slowly away then and could surprise today.

3.16: MIRACLE KID won decisively on his last start at Doncaster in March, but is 12th best in the handicap now and seems difficult to assess. Mike Henton-Elliott's record and his ZOOM UP is interesting at long odds. This gelding, well suited by fast ground, is handily drawn.

3.40: KAHLA finished a close-up fourth in the Prix Maurice de Gheest at Doornvliet and that performance in a Group One event entitles this colt to victory here.

GOODWOOD

2.40: Some hefty bets came off when Almanzakal won on his debut at Sandown in July. This colt went on

longed to Persian Punch, whose superstructure could house several Greeks, while there were signs of ageing about the truncated players.

Further Flight is now a ghostly figure with a milky coat, and if you lost him in a snowdrift you

would force him to the head of the field despite the impression that he was the animal that least wanted to be there. From the outset Roberts was pushing away as if his vehicle still had the handbrake on, but he had seen this all before. What became revealatory was the favourite's easy capitulation four furlongs out. "I thought I'd go and annoy him [Double Trigger] as it is the only way to beat him," Kieren Fallon, Canon Can's rider, reported. "He kept finding a hit more and a hit more but in the end he had nothing left to finish with."

Canon Can, though, still had plenty of petrol sloshing around his tank and with Fallon at his ferocious best at the acceleration he was never going to be overtaken. Persian Punch trundled into second while Further Flight finished in front of Double Trigger for the first time in six efforts as he completed an alliterative frame.

Canon Can was remarkable

only for his slowness in his career, but time and distance have seen him flourish. Midnight Line, a stablemate, is at the other end of the precocity ladder, and she completed a hat-trick in the May Hill Stakes. Optimistic could finish only seventh in this contest, but then her owner, Mystic Meg, knew she would.

The trophy for this Group

Three race could probably find its own way to Warren Place.

Cecil has now won seven of the last 11 runnings and 11 in all, including one with Midnight Air, Midnight Line's dam.

The most recent victory was further testament to Faltoo's

skills, as his coxeyance decided to chart the path of a six dog. This double lifted the Irishman to 140 winners, seven ahead of Frankie Detori, who had only a damaged thumb to show for his efforts following Noisette's sprawling exit from the stalls in the peccadillo race.

The Trappist reception which greeted the winner of the Park Stakes, Almusharaf, suggested if anyone had backed him at 25-1 they did not do so in the South Yorkshire area. The winner was a third success for the Kuwaiti, Kamal Maidi, who received a royal British reception at his Newmarket yard earlier this year when he was held up at gunpoint. However, they are obviously a forgiving lot in Kuwait. "I love racing in this country," Maahid said, "for me it is the best place to train."

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The trophy for this Group

Three race could probably find its own way to Warren Place.

Cecil has now won seven of the last 11 runnings and 11 in all, including one with Midnight Air, Midnight Line's dam.

The most recent victory was further testament to Faltoo's

skills, as his coxeyance decided to chart the path of a six dog. This double lifted the Irishman to 140 winners, seven ahead of Frankie Detori, who had only a damaged thumb to show for his efforts following Noisette's sprawling exit from the stalls in the peccadillo race.

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Rising through the ranks
Greg Rusedski is on course for a place in the world's top ten, page 27

sport

FRIDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 1997 • THE INDEPENDENT

Scotland the brave

Without playing, Craig Brown's side have edged closer to the World Cup finals, page 26



Roman redemption is beckoning for Gascoigne

GLENN MOORE

Football Correspondent

22-23 He never produced his best in the Eternal City but the Romans loved him nevertheless. Now Paul Gascoigne, having left the Italian capital unfulfilled, has the chance to return and triumph.

But only if he, and his England team-mates, remain injury-free. "Give me my experienced players," said Glenn Hoddle in the aftermath of England's 4-0

win over Moldova at Wembley on Wednesday. He is too devout to make a direct appeal to fate but fortune will clearly have a part to play in Rome on 11 October. Already Alan Shearer has been ruled out through injury and Italy's Roberto Di Matteo through suspension. Teddy Sheringham and Tony Adams are on the way back but have still to prove their fitness.

It could hinge, however, on Gascoigne, who rolled back the years with a virtuous display on Wednesday. At times it is hard to remember that he is

only 30, so long has he filled the back and front pages.

"I didn't expect him to run

games in the summer [Le Tournoi] but I saw signs in the summer of him coming back to his best," Hoddle said. "He showed against Moldova that he still has that ability, it is now a case of staying injury-free. Prevention is the key, he has to realise that at 30 he cannot go out drinking and has to have the right diet."

"He is maturing. Alan Smith [England's physiotherapist] has been with the squad much longer than me and he says he

has never seen Paul as quiet as this week. He's been really focused."

Most people have heard this before, more than once, but Hoddle appears to believe that Gascoigne the person is finally controlling Gazz's personality. If this is true, he deserves credit for persevering with him.

"That may be so," he replied, but it applies to all the staff and to him. He has to do it himself. At times I have had to come down hard on him for things he has done in training or matches and he has always

responded. He is misunderstood, at heart he is a smashing lad.

"He knew what the headlines would be if he did not perform tonight. 'Gazza's blown his last chance'; 'Gazz can't play in Rome'. He responded magnificently. You can say it was only Moldova but if it was that easy they would all have been doing the things he did."

Not that it was his last chance. Hoddle, drawing on his own bitter experience, has consistently told Gascoigne he is prepared to wait for his form to return as long as his behav-

iour meets the England coach's standards.

"I know how he feels. I was always being told it was my last chance and I needed the manager [Ron Greenwood and Bobby Robson] to take the pressure off me. He never did. I've learned from that how to treat Paul."

Not that Hoddle's praise was unstinting. "He was magnificent with the ball but he will need to do more defensively against better teams, David Batty did well for him in this game."

In the absence of Shearer, and the possible loss of Sheringham,

Hoddle will also have been lifted by the sharpness in front of goal of Ian Wright and Paul Scholes. The latter was one of five Manchester United youngsters involved in the game, which gives the Champions' League match with Juventus on 1 October added spice.

"It will be more good experience for them," Hoddle said. "Last year they may have lost both games but I thought United improved all the time. They could easily have won with their second half performance at Old Trafford."

And so to Rome. England,

barring further injury, are likely to play the following XI: Seaman; G Neville, Adams, Campbell; Beckham, Gascoigne, Batty, Ince, Le Saux, Sheringham or Scholes, Wright. It is a good mixture of youth and experience, of skill and steel, with four regular goal-scorers. Hoddle's England have a perfect away record, winning in Moldova, Georgia, Poland and France. A full house in the Stadio Olimpico is a daunting prospect but, as Hoddle added, "80,000 fans can be a bonus but if you don't get anything early on it can work against you."

Marsh calms Kent's nerves

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Headingley
Yorkshire 312
Kent 374

A rum old tussle is developing here with Kent and Yorkshire, two of the Championship's top three teams scrapping for position in next week's endgame. With second-placed Glamorgan likely to take a full complement of points from their match with Essex, no quarter will be asked or given over the next two days, though Yorkshire will bave to compete without their ever-vigilant fast bowler Darren Gough, who tore a hamstring.

That said, Kent, who have not won a Championship match here since the war, have probably edged ahead in spite of a wholehearted career best by Chris Silverwood who took 7 for 93. With Gough's premature departure, it was just reward for some marvellous fast bowling that combined both aggression and swing.

Striking with the three key wickets of Alan Wells, Mark Ealham and Graham Cowdry, either side of lunch, Silverwood gave Yorkshire real hope of taking a substantial first-innings lead. Once more though, Kent with their unyielding lower order again scoring the important runs, managed to finish the day

62 runs ahead, their inspirational captain Steve Marsh the penultimate man out for a stoic 84.

Marsh is having quite a season. He has never been a mug with the bat, but the 82 first-class runs he has so far scored this season surely make him the finest No 9 in the land. He is also one of the bravest, and despite a painful blow to his right thumb when Craig White thumbed a bouncer home, he continued, uncomplaining, as a series of trademark stiff-legged clips and pick-ups found the fence at square leg.

Many sides, who have got rid of Kent's early order have come unstuck against the tail. It happened again yesterday, when having reduced the visitors to 202 for 7, Yorkshire allowed them to reach 374, eventually bowling the last man Alan Iglesden out, moments before bad light and rain lopped 14 overs off the day's play.

There were half centuries too for Trevor Ward and Matthew Fleming and a handy contribution of 40 from the night-watchman Dean Headley. Few players hit the ball as hard as Ward, who having dealt almost exclusively in boundaries – 48 of his 56 runs coming in fours – was bowled leg-stump as he attempted another.

Fleming too, gives the ball a mighty thump. Coming to the crease during Silverwood's triple strike either side of the lunch gong, the all-rounder was

the dominant partner as 83 runs were made for the eighth wicket with Marsh. Once again it needed Silverwood to end yet another important cameo. With Gough leaving the field in mid-afternoon and Paul Hutchison unable to find any swing, Silverwood was left to plough a lonely furrow. Running

down the hill at the Kirkstall Lane end, he bowled 23.3 overs.

On the evidence of yesterday, he has made considerable strides since his forays for England in Zimbabwe last winter. On a slow pitch several Kent batsmen attest to his short ball, saying it was the quickest thing many of them had faced all season.

It could have been a tricky day for Kent, who now both look and play like a team, a state of affairs in stark contrast to the side who finished bottom two years ago. If they do go on to win the Championship it would be a triumph for such a whole-hearted organism, and mud in the eye for the more flamboy-

ant but under-achieving clubs around.

In a two divisional Champi-

onship they would not have been able to go so readily from top to bottom. Something that counties would do well to remember next Monday, when they vote on the matter at Lord's.

More reports, scoreboard, page 26

Yorkshire's Craig White bowls Trevor Ward of Kent at Headingley yesterday

Photograph: Empics

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3402 Friday 12 September

By Phil

Thursday's solution



ACROSS

- 7 One who helps to govern town and realm, possibly (18)
- 9 To keep out of view is common after deception (3, 3)
- 10 Lights not working almost entirely (5)
- 11 Storm about wanton orgy (an unpleasant sight) (8)
- 12 Try vainly to sell an animal that's gone! (4, 1, 4, 5)
- 13 Shaking with some secret remorse (6)
- 16 More than one team losing heart cheers a period of rest (10)
- 18 It's got a sprint running with a fit of loudness! (8, 6)
- 20 Annoying person with not long to live? (8)

DOWN

- 1 Able to play at night till food is dished up (8)
- 2 Slangily brilliant about acting – poor at audition (4)
- 3 What has me swallowing drink, upset? A mystery (6)
- 4 Obscure words on dust-jacket cut short (4)
- 5 Plot to get an easy situation (3, 2, 5)
- 6 Dog caught by Oliver (6)
- 8 Most of illness and decay restricting one that's helpless (9)
- 13 One outburst of horseplay turns up among various rogues fond of company (10)
- 14 No real shock in extract from musical? (9)
- 17 Abandoning position? A Petty Officer has to remain round prow of ship (8)
- 18 Information brought up about man's country in Scandinavia... (6)
- 19 ... no way one's cold in Scandinavia (6)
- 21 Cover skin (4)
- 23 Fielder drops fifth, the sap (4)

England summon massed ranks

Rugby Union

CHRIS HEWITT

No fewer than 77 players, nearly the entire English-qualified population of the Allied Dunbar Premiership, were yesterday summoned by the Rugby Football Union to next Wednesday's national squad get-together at Bisham Abbey. Don Rutherford, the RFU rugby director who compiled the list in the glaring absence of a coaching panel, would have saved himself an awful lot of time had he simply named those not required.

Bisham is a huge, rambling complex and Rutherford clearly believes the England élite should expand to fill the space available. Five full-hbacks, eight wings and 13 – yes, 13 – second rows have been asked to attend, that last group pitting relative newcomers in Danny Grewcock and Chris Murphy alongside blasts from the past in the shape of Martin Bayfield and Richard West.

It was still unclear yesterday whether this great tide of rugby humanity would be introduced to the new coaching team when it descends on Buckinghamshire for next week's pow-wow. Contractual discussions with Clive Woodward, the chief coach designate, and two of his putative sidekicks, Ian Mitchell, of Sale, and Rob Smith, of Wasps, have yet to be concluded, although Twickenham sources were confident of an official announcement sooner rather than later.

As things stand, the players will simply discuss the forthcoming autumn internationals against

THE 77-MAN TRAINING SQUAD

By Phil

Wednesday 17 September

England's 77-man training squad

for the tour of South Africa

and New Zealand

is as follows:

Clive Woodward (Head Coach),

Ian Mitchell (Assistant Coach),

Rob Smith (Assistant Coach),

Mike Catt (Physiotherapist),

Steve Tandy (Physiotherapist),

Chris Murphy (Physiotherapist),

Mike Catt (Physiotherapist),